2017 DEFENSE & MILITARY
TOP PRIORITIES
For Military Preparedness, Personnel And Policy


Gen. Carter F. Ham


Dr. Thomas Mahnken


Sen. Elizabeth Dole


Gen. Philip Breedlove


Col. Andrew O. Hall

A Special Report Prepared by The Washington Times Advocacy Department

2017 DEFENSE & MILITARY

Top Priorities for Military Preparedness, Personnel and Policy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Washington Times
ADVOCACY/SPECIAL SECTIONS

Cheryl Wetzstein
SPECIAL SECTIONS MANAGER

Advertising Department:
202-636-3062

Larry T. Beasley
PRESIDENT AND CEO

Thomas P. McDevitt
CHAIRMAN

David Dadisman
GENERAL MANAGER

Adam VerCammen
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING & SALES

Andrea Hutchins
SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER

Patrick Crofoot
SUPERVISOR, GRAPHICS

Special Sections are multipage tabloid products that run in The Washington Times daily newspaper and are posted online and in PDF form on its website. Sponsors and advertisers collaborate with The Times' advertising and marketing departments to highlight a variety of issues and events, such as The Power of Prayer, North Korea's Nuclear Threat, Gun Rights Policy Conference and Rolling Thunder Memorial Day Tribute to Veterans. Unless otherwise identified, Special Sections are prepared separately and without involvement from the Times' newsroom and editorial staff.

Priorities: Renewed capacity, capability, sustainability, respect

By Gen. Carter F. Ham

Job No. 1 of our nation's commander-in-chief is, as the Preamble to the Constitution describes, providing for the common defense.

This duty to the people requires a trained, modernized military force with sufficient capacity to accomplish an ever-expanding set of complex missions.

Defending critical infrastructure at home and abroad, responding on short notice to humanitarian and natural disasters, and building the military capacity of allies and partners are all important missions. But the no-fail mission, the unwavering bond with the people of our nation, is to deter those who threaten America, Americans and American interests and, when deterrence fails, to defeat our enemies in battle wherever and whenever it may occur.

America's Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard — active, National Guard and Reserve — must be manned, trained and modernized to prevail across the full range of military activities. The commander-in-chief and the Congress bear shared responsibility for leading the way to make this possible.

The Joint Chiefs, including Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Milley, have warned that our armed forces are at a state of high risk in having sufficient capacity, capability and sustainability for major confrontations. This is where President Donald Trump's leadership is needed.

Today's Army, while inarguably the best army on the planet, is too small and insufficiently modernized to meet the global demands placed on it. The commander-in-chief and Congress have the opportunity now to close troubling gaps; regain critical combat and operational readiness; and to balance, size and position of the Army to meet current and future strategic requirements.

Mr. Trump and Congress already have signaled their intent to reverse the downsizing of the Army. The president's proposal to add 60,000 Regular Army soldiers must, however, come fully funded for training and modernization, pay and benefits. Adding more troops without full support leads to what many call a "hollow force."

The single most effective measure to enhance military readiness, however, would be to restore adequate, stable, predictable levels of funding for the Army and all of the military services. Congress must remove budget caps preventing growth in defense spending and repeal the threat of sequestration, the automatic cuts that occur when a bipartisan budget agreement isn't reached. As he was campaigning for our nation's highest office, Mr. Trump called for the elimination of military sequestration, and almost every member of Congress has decried it as a strategically foolish way of doing business.

That's not all. The president's leadership is also needed to provide budgetary stability by stopping the unfortunate and disruptive practice of beginning each new fiscal year under emergency funding. Temporary funding provided through a continuing resolution precludes the start of new projects, wreaks havoc with responsible budget execution and sows uncertainty in the ranks.

More than a decade of combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere have left the Army optimized for combatting terrorism and conducting counterinsurgency operations, but with significant gaps in capabilities against near-peer adversaries. Worrisome shortfalls exist in air and missile defense, long-range fires, as well as the lethality and survivability of Brigade Combat Teams. The Army is behind in fielding the next generation of tactical vehicles and needs to improve tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, artillery systems and aviation assets.

The technological advantage once enjoyed by the U.S. Army is quickly eroding. We owe it to the men and women who voluntarily step forward to protect us to do everything we can to ensure they never engage in a fair fight.

Equipment isn't our only concern. The Regular Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Army civilian work forces need attention, professional development opportunities and adequate compensation for their patriotic service. Soldiers, civilians and their families, our military communities and the defense industry need more than a decent paycheck and occasional pat on the back. They need to feel respected.

Gen. Carter F. Ham retired from the U.S. Army in 2013 after almost 38 years of service in a career that spanned from serving as an enlisted infantryman in the 82nd Airborne Division to serving as U.S. Army Europe commanding general and as U.S. Africa Command commander. Commissioned in 1976 after graduating from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio, where he was a distinguished military graduate, Gen. Ham has served in Italy, Germany, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Macedonia, Qatar, Iraq and 40 African countries. He became president and CEO of the Association of the U.S. Army, an educational nonprofit based in Arlington, Virginia, on July 1, 2016.

Getting Russia right

By Gen. Philip Breedlove

One great virtue of this electoral season, for all its divisiveness, was that it generated a robust debate about our relationship with Russia.

Of course, Russian President Vladimir Putin helped that debate along... The preponderance of intelligence — as well as basic common sense — suggest that Russia did try to shape the outcome of our U.S. elections.

It's possible, as some suggest, that Mr. Putin truly wanted Mr. Trump to be his new sparring partner... perhaps because Mr. Putin sees himself in our new president, or perhaps because he sees Mr. Trump as more pliable than his predecessors. And it's also possible, as others suggest, that what Mr. Putin really wanted was to damage the faith of the American people — and the world at large — in the U.S. democratic system. Either way, Mr. Putin's shot found its target.

But our concerted focus on Russia's interference in our election, as egregious as it was, puts us at risk of focusing on the wrong things. While we focus on the tactical-level mechanics, Russia is playing an aggressive, long-term game with strategic-level ends.

The first thing we should learn from Russia's electoral intervention is that Mr. Putin feels even more emboldened, and less constrained, than he has in the past. His invasion and occupation of Ukraine was a blatant violation of international law and agreed norms, and was done apparently without fear of reprisal. His disruption of the U.S. electoral process demonstrates a different side of that same feeling of impunity.

The second thing we should see in Russia's intervention is an extension of its use of *maskirovka* — attempting to fool us into bickering amongst ourselves — while Russia continues to quietly unravel our confidence, and the world's, in America's strong democratic

» see **BREEDLOVE** | C4

National defense: The paramount issue

By Sen. James Talent

I cannot remember a time when an incoming administration faced so many substantial threats to American national security. In 2014, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said: "To put it mildly, the world is a mess." She was right, and the world has gotten a lot worse since then.

Everywhere, the risks to the United States are growing. From Europe to the South China Sea, from North Korea to the Middle East, America is threatened, by great powers (Russia and China), by aggressive and unbalanced rogue states (North Korea and Iran, primarily), and by subnational movements and in particular the spreading danger of Islamic jihadism.

All of these risks require the urgent attention of the new administration. But one issue transcends them all: the need to rebuild the American military.

The armed forces of the United States are the foundation of American national security. They perform two broad functions: They directly deter armed aggression, and they provide credibility, time and space for the tools of "soft power" to work. American diplomacy, alliances and economic power are the primary elements of our national influence, but they are only effective to the extent America is militarily strong.

The one indispensable element of superpower status is power, and the most defining and critical tool of power is hard power.

Yet the foundation of our national security is cracking, largely because the budget sequester three years ago cut a trillion dollars from defense spending over 10 years.

The defense budget is now at a level that cannot sustain American strength. The Navy has fewer ships than at any time since before World War I; the Army is sinking to its pre-WWII size, and the Air Force is smaller, and flying older aircraft, than at any time since the inception of the service. All of the services desperately need to recapitalize and modernize their inventories of equipment, including major weapons systems.

In addition, the satellite architecture, on which the civilian economy as well as the armed forces depend for communications, is aging and vulnerable, and the land-based leg of America's nuclear triad — the Minutemen missiles in particular — are in crying need of modernization.

None of this is in serious dispute, and the implications of it are as bad as they seem. Sometimes a problem seems dangerous and difficult, but further examination shows that it can be solved more easily, and with less risk, than appeared on the surface.

That is not the case here. America is in danger, and there is no rabbit that can be pulled out of a hat to make everything all right. It will take a lot more money, spent a lot more wisely than money has been spent in the past, to rebuild American defenses.

For those who want a complete picture of the status of the armed forces, I recommend the Report of the National Defense Panel, which was issued in 2014. (http://www.usip.org/publications/national-defense-panel-releases-assessment-of-2014-quadrennial-defense-review)

To his credit, President Trump announced during his campaign an aggressive defense plan that, if executed, will rival the buildup of the Reagan years. To be sure, the new Pentagon leadership may well decide — once it has time to engage in real force planning — that more than what the president proposed is necessary. But certainly nothing less will suffice.

It will take the entirety of the president's first term for his defense plan to begin shifting the balance of global power back in America's direction. In the meantime, there will be a risk gap — a period in which adversaries will be tempted by both our current weakness, and the prospect of our growing strength, to aggress while there is still time.

Mr. Trump enters office with a lifetime of experience in negotiating and maneuvering in the face of risk. He will need all his skill, and a good bit of luck, to navigate the troubled waters that lie ahead.

Sen. James Talent (R-MO) served in the House of Representatives (1993-2001) and U.S. Senate (2002-2007). He is senior fellow and director of the National Security 2020 Project at the Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies at American Enterprise Institute.

BREEDLOVE

From page **C3**

tradition. Russia is no newcomer to the artful sleight of hand: One of several goals behind Russia's military intervention in Syria was to deflect the world's attention away from Russia's unlawful occupation of Ukraine. This was the same idea in a different form.

And the third, and by far the biggest, thing we should see in Russia's electoral meddling is firm confirmation, if confirmation were needed, that we do not have a grand strategic partner in Russia today. Russia views our interactions as zero-sum and believes that the best way to bolster itself is by degrading America. Russia doesn't just seek to break the rules of the international order; it seeks to rewrite them. Russia sees itself as a great power, able to drive outcomes on the world stage at will. And Russia has made it clear that it is willing to use military force to back up its claims and achieve its ends.

The relationship between the U.S. and Russia is as bad as I've ever seen it, and it's continuing to head in the wrong direction. But while it's bad, it's far from hopeless.

A Europe "whole, free, and at peace" — and, I would add, "prosperous" — is good for European nations; good for the U.S.; and also, ultimately, good for Russia — for the security and stability of its leadership, and for the prosperity, opportunity and well-being of its people. That gives us all a common goal to work toward.

The relationship between the U.S. and Russia is as bad as I've ever seen it, and it's continuing to head in the wrong direction. But while it's bad, it's far from hopeless.

Unfortunately, there are no shortcuts, no grand bargain that can lay a foundation for an acceptable, sustainable future relationship.

The best — the only — way to move toward that vision is through dialogue, candid dialogue that does not paper over past sins, but does leave the door open to wide-ranging pragmatic cooperation in the future.

We need to be clear about our expectations. We need to recognize — if not always agree with — Russia's view of the world. And we need to choose specific, meaningful, visible targets to achieve together.

Russia can choose to be a constructive player on the world stage — a choice that the U.S. and our allies should encourage and welcome.

USAF Gen. Philip M. Breedlove retired in 2016 as the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe and Commander US European Command with over 38 years of service, across which he served eight times in Europe at all levels of operations and command. He is a Distinguished Professor at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech.

Time for an 'information Manhattan Project'

By Maj. Gen. Bruce Lawlor

War is politics by other means, Clausewitz said. Its violence and death are reserved for times when traditional political and diplomatic means have failed to protect the nation.

Our military establishment should be ready to do two things: 1) destroy terrorist networks, such as ISIS, and 2) win high-intensity combat operations against Russia, China, Iran and North Korea.

Our capacity and ability to prosecute the second of these two tasks has been eroded by sequestration and the focus on counterterrorism operations. People are concerned.

The reason for our angst is that we got the basics wrong. We worry about the military's ability to wage war not because politics and diplomacy have failed, but because they haven't been used.

War is about whose idea wins, but instead of focusing our intellectual energy on dividing our enemies, we have focused it on dividing ourselves. For years, we've ignored the ideological fight against our adversaries, refusing to leverage our enormous advantages in managing political information to discredit our enemies' beliefs. As a result, terrorist ideology is spreading and bad actors are rearranging the international order.

We say we're winning against ISIS and point to occasional drone kills and the mess we call Syria. Perhaps so, but ISIS ideology has expanded into 31 countries since "the dirty rats" declared a caliphate in June 2014. We allow it to grow by remaining silent or denying the existence of Islam's importance to its brutal ideology.

Even worse, we suggest that only Muslims should talk about it, an intellectual idiocy akin to calling for dialogue about whether we should die and declining to participate in the conversation.

A recent poll shows that well above 90 percent of Muslims abhor terrorist violence. That is reassuring. Islam is indeed a religion of peace.

But it's also irrelevant because a small but significant percentage of Muslims support ISIS and accept the killing. Unfortunately, a small percentage of 1.6 billion Muslims is still a very big number. It's about 38 million in the 11 countries surveyed, out of 50 majority-Muslim countries worldwide.

There is much work to be done by people of all faiths to decrease these numbers by arguing that any religious belief accepting of violence and death is morally wrong.

On the bad actor front, Russian President Vladimir Putin has outthought us, outmaneuvered us, and outflanked us to re-establish Russia's influence over the Caucasus and Central Asia, intimidate and annex parts of Eastern Europe, re-emerge as a key player in the Middle East, and position himself with Turkey to break apart the NATO Alliance.

For years, we've ignored the ideological fight against our adversaries, refusing to leverage our enormous advantages in managing political information to discredit our enemies' beliefs. As a result, terrorist ideology is spreading and bad actors are rearranging the international order.

It is a remarkable performance — expanding Russian influence by calibrating bad behavior to be just short of triggering a U.S. military response. He exploits disaffected populations, using media to inflame their grievances and agents of coercion to ignite partisan violence. Then he swoops in to grab territory under the guise of restoring peace, or leaves the instability to fester and adjusts it like a rheostat to suit his needs.

It's a new form of warfare, one that hides aggression in ambiguity. Mr. Putin is winning because we have no response except military operations to stop his aggression, and he has calculated correctly that we will not risk all-out war with Russia where the threat is ambiguous.

There are things we can do, short of sending in the Marines.

Mr. Putin succeeds only if minority populations become so disaffected that civil violence becomes possible. It is a struggle involving good governance and good public relations to convince people their voices will be heard, and much of it is fought in the information dimension of war — a place where we hold clear advantages if we but use them. We can deter Mr. Putin by driving up his costs, exposing his evil, uniting people against him and creating a real risk of defeat.

We should remember that the Soviet empire collapsed not because of conventional military power, but because we made Soviet aggression too expensive to pursue, and we demonstrated that freedom and free markets offered more opportunity to more people than communism.

We have the infrastructure, the knowledge and the political skills to launch unmatchable ideological and information campaigns against our adversaries, but we aren't ready to do so. It's not a matter of capacity or ability, it's a matter of will.

The U.S. military isn't ready to create this new American response to aggression — but, then again, it wasn't ready to build nuclear weapons, but it built them. It's time for an information Manhattan Project to protect our nation.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. Bruce M. Lawlor is a former member of the Homeland Security Council and chief of staff of the Department of Homeland Security. He is the author of the upcoming book, "When Deadly Force is Involved: A Look at the Legal Side of Stand Your Ground, Duty to Retreat, and Other Questions of Self-Defense" (Rowman & Littlefield, March 2017).

How the Trump administration can make doing business with DoD great again

By Capt. Dale Lumme

The incoming Trump administration has stated distinct priorities for making America great again. A top priority of that journey is the ability of the Department of Defense (DoD) to entice innovative companies to do business with the government through a whole range of programs, including initiatives such as Defense Innovation Unit Experimental (DIUx). However, some of the foundational deterrents for the aerospace and defense industry doing business with DoD are widespread feelings that they are ignored, misunderstood, or their message is lost in translation.

Industry knows it is in trouble when a government civil servant says, "I understand your need to make a profit." If you need to say it, then you really don't understand the imperatives business face.

The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) gives government contracting officers "wide latitude to exercise business judgment." Unfortunately, most contracting officers have little to no experience in private industry, and their business judgment is based on bureaucratic processes and certifications rather than profit and loss. From determining if intellectual property rights are valid to negotiating the amount of profit a contractor should receive, the government's business judgment is sometimes arbitrarily skewed in the government's favor.

Arguably, either by intent or because of decades of culture, there exists an inherent adversarial mentality with industry and a clear lack of understanding of why industry needs to prosper and make a profit in order to innovate, let alone survive.

The FAR requires contracting officers to work together as a team with industry and end-users. Unfortunately, the relationship between contracting officer and contractor is rarely described as teamwork. The lack of common understanding between the stakeholders creates a combative relationship that drives delays and increases costs, as each side is wary of the other's intentions. A less-than-standard commercial-sector profit margin would make defense contractors less competitive in global capital markets, where defense firms compete with the full spectrum of businesses.

One simple solution to the challenge of government's lack of understanding is to require contracting officers to have

» see **LUMME** | C6

Expanding tech advantages, 'cyber resiliency'

By Col. Andrew O. Hall

Republic of Korea, 2002 — a new second lieutenant on his first battalion live-fire exercise watched it quickly descend into chaos.

One of the battalion's 18 cannons would not digitally link with the fire direction center — a critical shortcoming in combat.

For more than an hour, crewmembers and noncommissioned officers toiled in vain to troubleshoot while the discontent of waiting commanders became increasingly vocal.

Finally the lieutenant, mostly out of boredom, thought to have a look for himself.

Pushing his way into the crowded crew compartment, he quickly realized he knew almost nothing about the system compared to the decades of experience immediately surrounding him. Yet perhaps that unfamiliarity led him to notice an almost trivial error: the date had been incorrectly entered on the fire control computer.

When the supervisor corrected the error — voila — the system worked perfectly, and with great relief the exercise resumed.

This anecdote, recounted by one of my officers, underscores a fundamental truth: Cyber, like all technology, is ultimately about people.

At that time, defense systems were becoming increasingly reliant on computers and digital networks. Yet few — if any — troops expected that an adversary might intentionally inflict misinformation as trivial as the wrong date into a weapon system. Moreover, finding such a glitch might be a matter of dumb luck.

Today, our tanks, howitzers and helicopters, even logistics management and delivery systems, are increasingly digitized and networked. It is a certainty that our soldiers must be ready for such an attempt.

This technology has spectacular battlefield effects: Our commanders are better able to understand where their troops are and where the enemy is, and provide the ability to avoid noncombatant protected sites, such as churches, hospitals and schools. Computers enable our weapons to shoot faster and more accurately, increasingly able to destroy an enemy while avoiding collateral damage and adding a layer of protection for civilians. Digitization brings our troops food, fuel and ammunition faster and more precisely, cutting the need for stockpiles and shortening logistical trains.

Yet with fantastic capabilities, technology also brings unexpected vulnerabilities. Determined adversaries may disrupt our systems and capabilities in ways we had not imagined. Where once the only way to defeat a tank on the battlefield was by opposing physical force, now an almost trivial error introduced into the system's navigation computer or fire control system might render it ineffective.

The Army Cyber Command, the Army Cyber Institute at West Point and the Army Cyber Center of Excellence have begun the work of developing a ready cyber force dedicated to offensive and defensive cyber operations. The Army — alongside its sister services — has devoted significant resources, starting with people. The skills required for those who establish, maintain and defend our networks are more than one person could possibly provide. In just a few short years, the Army has launched a dedicated career field for cyber soldiers, trained hundreds of these soldiers and civilians alike to high standards in cyber operations, built 41 cyber mission force teams that are now operating and defending our nation in cyberspace, and integrated cyber operations into our traditional ground combat strategy.

We are making progress in recruiting cyber operators from within the military and civilian life with the requisite skills – technical, but also critical and creative.

We are making progress in reimagining how we recruit, educate and train cyber operators with the requisite skills — technical, but also critical and creative. For example, in addition to their education and training, the Army's Cyber Leader Development Program brings West Point and ROTC cadets outstanding opportunities outside the classroom. The result is an Army cyber force that will be able to operate and maintain our systems and understand the complexities of how our enemies may try to defeat us.

In addition to new people, we've launched a cultural shift across the Army. Even a few years ago, a soldier needed nothing more than a checklist to maintain their vehicle. Today, that same soldier must be integrated into a larger effort to verify digital systems, understanding all the ways our enemies might try seek to disable them. Behind this soldier must be an interdisciplinary team ready to investigate and inform the Army of new and evolving threats and vulnerabilities.

Leading this effort is the Army Cyber Institute. We have established it with Army officers of broad tactical expertise and civilian researchers with expertise across the academic spectrum. This allows us to tailor support and research to emerging policy and strategic concerns, ultimately yielding a more tactically capable Army. Our researchers are not looking just at today's problems; they are asking what's next and developing partnerships with academia and industry to find solutions. The result is critical to maintaining and expanding our technological advantages and cyber resiliency.

Teamwork among formerly distinct specialists in signal, military intelligence and special operations is accelerating this effort. U.S. Army soldiers will still have checklists, and technical glitches will still disrupt training exercises. But tomorrow's soldiers will be better able to defend our nation, both on the battlefield and in cyberspace, thanks to the research the Army Cyber Institute is conducting in partnership with the Army Cyber Command, the Army Cyber Center of Excellence, academia and industry.

Col. Andrew O. Hall is director of the Army Cyber Institute at West Point. A graduate of West Point, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and is a U.S. Army cyber officer and veteran of numerous operational assignments. The views expressed here are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Defense nor the Department of the Army.

LUMME

From page **C5**

relevant private-sector experience. Just as the uniformed military is exploring options to have service members take a sabbatical to pursue private-sector experience, so should the civilian bureaucrats in DoD. This simple step would generate a richer acquisition work force that is better equipped to exercise business judgment appropriately.

Another solution is to have contracting officer warrants approved and renewed by a joint panel of government and private-sector representatives. Such a venue would give industry and DoD acquisition leadership a tangible mechanism to ensure that the people on the front lines of implementing acquisition policy are adhering to published guidance, statute and the spirit in which those are written. This process would facilitate the teamwork between government and industry as envisioned in the FAR, and such a panel would be able to observe general trends, weaknesses and strengths, and be able to make broader, informed recommendations for systematic improvement.

There is no magic bullet to make DoD the customer of choice for Silicon Valley. However, if DoD had contracting officers and program managers with vast private-sector experience, they would see that many of the regulations they are required to adhere to fly in the face of commercial best practices and certainly defy the concept of teamwork.

For example, in the very same section of the FAR that charges contracting officers to negotiate acceptable terms with contractors in exchange for transferring data rights to the government, they are first directed to consider alternatives — such as reverse engineering the contractor's product — or cherry-picking relevant specs and using them to acquire or develop functionally equivalent items.

Thus, the government clearly states its intent to either reverse engineer your product or provide some of your technical specifications to your competition. That is not a business environment in which any vendor wants to operate.

Small innovative companies, whose owners have invested their time, talent, hearts and indeed their very own personal financial livelihoods, have learned quickly that doing business with the federal government bureaucracy is not conducive to a thriving business.

The taxpayers deserve a defense establishment that is held to the same business standards as the rest of America. Requiring private-sector experience for acquisition professionals and allowing industry to retain its intellectual property would increase the level of trust between industry and government and attract innovative companies to do business with DoD.

Retired Navy Capt. Dale Lumme is president of the Navy League of the United States, National Capital Council; maritime adviser at The Spectrum Group; immediate past chairman of the National Maritime Policy Committee; and a member of Veterans for Acquisition Accountability.

The military the country needs

By Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula

One of the first postings of the Trump White House was a link entitled "Making Our Military Strong Again." The new administration faces an enormous challenge in fulfilling this objective.

First, it has to put in context just what that statement means. I suggest the following. There are two enduring tenets of our national security strategy that over the years have served the United States well: one, that we will engage on every continent around the world to promote peace and shape the security environment to ensure stability; and two, in the event we do need to fight, we will do so in an expeditionary fashion, away from U.S. territory, and be able to win more than one major conflict at a time.

In order to accomplish both of these fundamental tenets, we need a set of robust, capable and ready forces with a rotational base sufficient to sustain operations.

We currently cannot meet these goals. Making our military strong again should be defined as building sufficient forces and capabilities to accomplish both.

Second, the new administration needs to introduce a discussion of the first-order principles and the priority of resource allocation for the U.S. government. It is vitally important to remember that the first responsibility of the United States government is the security of the American people. As the Preamble of our Constitution states, the federal government was established to "provide for the common defense," and subsequently to "promote the general welfare."

Recent decisions have confused this prioritization, with the Budget Control Act taxing defense spending at a rate greater than twice its percentage of the total federal budget.

It is time to return to first principles and get our priorities straight. For too many years, arbitrary spending limits have determined U.S. military force structure instead of our national security strategy determining it. Said another way, we have a growing strategy-resource mismatch.

Third, while all the services are underresourced, some need attention ahead of others. The Air Force is an enterprise that provides capabilities that truly make it the "indispensable force" for U.S. military operations. We cannot fight as a nation — in any contingency — without the U.S. Air Force. It provides the global vigilance, global reach and global power that all the combatant commands require to succeed. Yet, among the services, the Air Force has been the hardest hit by resource neglect, and as a result, it is the oldest, smallest and least ready it has ever been in its history.

This is a result of: 1) over 25 years of continuous combat; 2) budget-driven manpower reductions of 40,000 over the last 10 years; 3) neglect of Air Force fighter procurement in the 1990s, where no new fighters were purchased; 4) an excessively aged force of bombers, over half of which predate the Cuban Missile Crisis; 5) "advanced" training aircraft that were bought when John F. Kennedy was president; and 6) sequestration that did to our Air Force what our worst enemies could only hope to achieve — grounding over 20 percent of our combat air forces and destroying our traditional high levels of readiness.

Today, the Air Force operates a geriatric force of bombers over 50 years old; trainers and helicopters over 40; and fighters over 30. During Desert Storm — where we won quickly and decisively — we had 134 fighter squadrons. Today, we have 55 — a 60 percent reduction in fighting forces. To put this more clearly, today there are more World War II-era P-51 fighters flying in the world than fifth-generation F-22s in the entire Air Force inventory. While great for the air show industry, that's not healthy for America's air dominance capacity that the rest of the services rely upon to effectively operate.

So the Air Force requires serious recapitalization, but not just aircraft: The land-based nuclear missile force is over 40 years old. Its intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) forces have been in great demand, and not just the vehicles and sensors, but the analysts that turn all that ISR into knowledge. Our space forces provide the world a global utility in the form of GPS and communications, and ISR satellites must be modernized to survive modern threats. Then there is the growing demand for cyber warriors, and the list goes on.

Recapitalizing our Air Force will be expensive, but the only thing more expensive than a first-rate Air Force is a second-rate Air Force. With a first-rate Air Force, we deter conflict. With a second-rate Air Force, we encourage conflict and may lose. War is the most costly and wasteful of endeavors, so it is best to achieve peace through strength, and that is what must be the first priority of the Trump administration.

David A. Deptula, a retired Air Force Lt. General, planned the Desert Storm air campaign, orchestrated air operations over Iraq and Afghanistan, directed Air Force Intelligence, has flown over 3,000 flying hours in fighter-type aircraft, and is now dean of the Air Force Association's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Power Studies.

Rebuilding American military power

By Dr. Thomas G. Mahnken

The Trump administration has inherited a military that, while engaged worldwide in defense of America's interests, has been suffering from the combination of high operational tempo and the corrosive effects of sequestration.

One of its first priorities should be getting sequestration lifted. But a quick infusion of cash alone will be insufficient to restore American credibility, defeat our adversaries and prepare for the future.

The U.S. military clearly requires more resources if it is to continue to safeguard America's national interests in an increasingly competitive international environment. Indeed, both the congressionally mandated 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Independent Panel and the 2014 National Defense Panel achieved a bipartisan consensus that the Department of Defense needed more resources to protect American interests without undue risk. Seven years on from the first and three from the second, the gap between our means and the ends they serve has grown. As a result, the United States faces greater risk.

One source of risk is reduced readiness caused by sequestration. This has led to ships incapable of deploying and aircraft unable to fly. This, in turn, has harmed America's credibility in the eyes of its allies and its competitors.

Beyond readiness, we face a growing need to modernize U.S. conventional and nuclear forces. The calculus that has governed defense planning for much of the Bush and Obama administrations was that we could afford to take additional risk in preparing for a high-intensity war in order to focus on counterinsurgency. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates frequently put it, we needed to focus on the wars of the present rather than the possible wars of the future.

That risk calculation needs to change. Whereas we have spent the last 15 years focused on counterinsurgency, we are now in a period characterized by the reality of great-power competition and the increasing possibility of great-power conflict.

China and Russia are acting aggressively, both in their own regions and increasingly beyond them. China is busy remaking the geography of the Western Pacific, but is also increasingly active in the Indian Ocean and Africa. Russia not only has used force against Georgia and Ukraine and threatened other neighbors, but is also waging a campaign in Syria. Moreover, both China and Russia have been investing in military capabilities that threaten America's long-standing dominance in high-end conventional warfare.

In other words, the "wars of the future" may no longer lie that far in the future. Moreover, they are likely to differ considerably both from the great-power wars of the past, as well as the campaigns that we have been waging since the turn of the millennium.

That is not to say that battling radical Islamism will not continue to be an important priority. However, the capabilities that we need to wage that

» see **MAHNKEN** | C8

Trump's mission: Build a new American Army

By Dr. Douglas Macgregor

In January 1943, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, together with their respective military advisers, met in Morocco at Casablanca to devise the strategy that would win World War II. To some, the Casablanca Conference may seem like ancient history, but the exchange between Gen. George Marshall, U.S. Army chief of staff, and Gen. Sir Alan Brooke, chief of Britain's Imperial General Staff, has much to teach us.

Marshall opened the conference with a protest against Britain's endless operations against the Italians and Germans in the Mediterranean. If the war was to be won, argued Marshall, France had to be invaded in 1943, preferably before the end of autumn. Brooke, Churchill's principal military adviser, disagreed.

Brooke pointed out that the Germans still had more than 150,000 combat troops in France, and none had moved south in response to the Allied invasion of North Africa in November 1942 (Operation Torch). The strength of German air power over France was formidable, and the German capacity to rapidly reinforce its troops in the West made an Allied landing in France during 1943 extremely dangerous, if not impossible.

Brooke won the argument.

Political and military leaders in every country always want conflict to be short and decisive. Marshall was no exception. But the key to victory — an accurate and sobering self-assessment of one's own strengths and weaknesses — is essential. Marshall's self-assessment was not realistic. The next 18 months of titanic battles, involving tens of millions of Soviet dead and wounded, as well as the slow, costly Allied advance through Italy, proved Brooke was right.

Inside the Washington beltway, there is a lot of talk about "confronting Russia," "pushing back China" and "aggressively challenging" Iran. However, few, in or out of uniform, comprehend what these phrases mean. Even fewer understand that great powers may escalate, not back down — particularly if they have the luxury of fighting on their own geographical doorsteps.

For example, an American military intervention in southern Iran would seem relatively unchallenging, but a U.S. invasion of Iran would likely precipitate Russian military intervention in northern Iran, based on the model of China's 1950 intervention in North Korea.

Both Moscow and Washington possess nuclear weapons, but short of defending Russian or American soil, their use is highly unlikely, meaning the military contest would depend primarily on the quality and composition of each side's general purpose forces.

To sustain American ground forces thousands of miles from the continental United States, America's Navy would contend with Russian submarines, as well as land-based Russian air and missile forces. For the first time in decades, the American Air Force would confront integrated air defenses stretching from the Crimea to Central Iran. The result would be a land war on strategic terms that do not favor the U.S.

Wars like the one just described demand the persistent employment of powerful aerospace, naval and ground forces. Keeping millions under arms in readiness to fight them is unaffordable, but maintaining the core capabilities to fight such wars is necessary and, as Defense Secretary James N. Mattis pointed out in his recent testimony before the Senate, it's affordable. Unfortunately, the last 25 years of open-ended interventions — not just the last 15 — have severely eroded the U.S. armed forces' military-technological edge and operational flexibility — and in particular, those of the U.S. Army.

Today's Army is accustomed to irregular warfare — the suppression of weak insurgents who do not have armies, air forces or air defenses, let alone naval power — and military "train and advise" missions. If ordered to fight in Eastern Europe, the Near East or Northeast Asia, the Army would send its vulnerable airborne or truck-mounted light infantry forces and, eventually, its antiquated brigade combat teams with tanks, guns and armored fighting vehicles designed in the 1970s. All of these forces would operate today the way they did in 1991 — in linear configuration under several layers of Army division and corps headquarters.

The kind of disaster that Brooke feared in 1943 would unfold in short order.

Warfare today demands a different Army, an army of self-contained, independent battle groups and formations tightly integrated with aerospace power that operate on land the way the Navy's ships operate at sea. These forces must have the mobility, survivability and firepower to *prevail in an integrated, Joint ISR, EW and STRIKE-dominated battle space*. It's not just a question of numbers. In wars of maneuver, quality trumps quantity — but the Army is not organized, trained or equipped to maneuver in the 21st century.

When war comes, the right investments in human capital, technology and organization — made years, sometimes decades, before the battle begins — create the margin of victory.

If the Trump administration is to build America's 21st century margin of victory, the archaic U.S. Army must become the Trump administration's obsession.

Retired U.S. Army Col. Douglas Macgregor, Ph.D., is a decorated combat veteran and author of five books. His most recent, "Margin of Victory: Five Battles that Changed the Face of Modern War," is available from Naval Institute Press.

MAHNKEN

From page **C7**

war are largely in hand. By contrast, over the past quarter century, we have neglected the means to deter, and if necessary wage, high-end warfare. These include not only today's major weapon systems, but also potentially high-leverage capabilities, such as those being pursued as part of the so-called Third Offset Strategy.

Modernization needs to include our nuclear deterrent. Historically, when the United States has drawn down its conventional forces, as it did in the 1950s and after the Vietnam War, it came to rely increasingly upon its nuclear deterrent. In recent years, by contrast, the United States has both drawn down both its conventional and nuclear forces. Now both require modernization, to include theater nuclear weapons.

The tasks of improving readiness and modernizing the force will require additional resources beyond those permitted by the Budget Control Act. But more money will be insufficient to prepare us for the future. Much of the effort that is required is intellectual.

The last decade and a half have left an indelible mark on those of us who fought; we need to ensure that that experience does not blind us to the very different circumstances that we may face. That includes developing the intellectual capacity to think about the character and conduct of war in the 21st century and to develop strategies and operational concepts to bring our enduring strengths to bear against our competitors. Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work are well equipped to meet these challenges.

Thomas G. Mahnken, Ph.D., is president and CEO of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. From 2006-2009, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning.

Time for tough choices

By Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr.

There is excitement at the Pentagon over President Trump's pledge to undertake a buildup of the country's military. Support for the new president's defense agenda is also found among many on Capitol Hill, with Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain proposing to add roughly $430 billion to the defense budget over the next five years.

A strong case can be made for enhancing the country's defenses. Much of the defense spending increases following 9/11 focused on operations against radical Islamist terrorist groups in Afghanistan and Iraq. Relatively little was spent on new equipment, while a substantial slice of the increase went to recruit and retain troops needed to undertake large-scale, seemingly open-ended operations.

Several new weapon systems were cancelled. To protect soldiers in the field, however, over $40 billion alone was spent on heavily armored troop transports, for which the Pentagon now has little use. The result was a "hollow buildup," with little in the way of new equipment heading to the field, while combat vehicles, planes and ships in the force continued aging, often at an accelerated rate due to the pace of combat operations.

In addition to contending with rapidly rising personnel costs and the consequences of the "hollow buildup," America's armed forces now face a far more formidable array of threats than during the decade or so following 9/11. Three revisionist powers seek to overturn the rules-based international order in regions long considered vital to U.S. security by presidents of both political parties. China, Iran and Russia are all engaged in acts of intimidation, coercion and even low-level aggression against American allies and security partners. Simply put, the military confronts rapidly growing threats with relatively fewer resources.

This presents Mr. Trump with a strategic choice: boost the military's ability to preserve a stable balance of power in the Western Pacific, Europe and the Middle East, or encourage further aggressive behavior from the revisionist powers.

Unfortunately, like the Red Queen's Race in Alice in Wonderland, the Pentagon will have to run hard just to stay in place. According to outgoing Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work, the Obama administration's Defense Department's program is short an average of $88 billion a year over the next five years. So even if Mr. McCain's budget increase becomes reality, the Pentagon may not be able to execute its existing plans, let alone undertake significant upgrades to its capabilities.

But the problems don't end here.

The Obama administration has left behind two fiscal time bombs. One involves interest payments on the country's rapidly growing debt. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), these payments are projected to increase from $233 billion in 2015 to over $800 billion by the mid-2020s. The second involves spending on entitlements, which CBO projects will nearly double, from over $2.3 trillion a year in 2015 to $4.1 trillion by 2026. If, as projected, the Social Security and Medicare trust funds are depleted in the early 2030s, additional revenues will need to be provided to avoid substantial benefit reductions.

If this plays out, these components of the federal government's budget pie will account for 83 percent of the total increase in spending over the coming decade. As entitlements and debt consume an ever-greater part of the budget pie, defense spending and spending on domestic priorities (such as education, the environment and transportation) will be progressively squeezed.

The Obama administration has left behind two fiscal time bombs. One involves interest payments on the country's rapidly growing debt.... The second involves spending on entitlements, which CBO projects will nearly double ... to $4.1 trillion by 2026.

Fortunately, this outcome is not cast in stone. A significant increase in taxes could help remedy the situation, as could spending cuts and entitlement reforms. But these tough choices were not addressed during the campaign. In fact, the American people were promised tax cuts for the middle class and that Social Security benefits would remain unchanged.

Something will have to give.

While Mr. Trump rightly notes that America's allies and partners can — and should — do more to defend against growing threats in their part of the world, they will need more U.S. leadership and muscle, not less. But undertaking a boost in defense spending while the country's fiscal pillars continue to erode will only kick the fiscal can down the road, risking the country's long-term defenses in the process.

Mr. Trump pledged to make America great again. Doing so entails restoring the country's economic foundation. This will require his leadership in convincing the American people of the need for near-term sacrifice. Toward this end, he can benefit from the advice of President Eisenhower, who declared, "our system must remain solvent, as we attempt a solution of this great problem of security. Else we have lost the battle from within that we are trying to win from without."

Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., Ph.D., is a distinguished senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

Trump administration: 'America First' and 'Peace Through Strength' national security policies

By Bill Gertz

President Donald Trump and his administration face an array of security threats and challenges around the world as the new president seeks to refocus U.S. government policies on putting America first.

Immediate priorities for the new president include revamping the military and intelligence policies toward the Islamic State terrorist group.

The IS has been hit hard by military strikes on its redoubts in Iraq and Syria. But the ultraviolent terror group has shown no signs of diminishing its growing influence around the world — it is inspiring small-scale terror attacks linked to what is being called by the new administration as part global jihadist movement and not individual, unlinked attacks.

Mr. Trump has tasked military commanders to draw up new plans for attacking and defeating what he has called the radical Islamist threat.

During his inaugural address Jan. 20, Mr. Trump vowed to "reinforce old alliances and form new ones — and unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism which we will eradicate completely from the face of the earth."

The president's new counterterror policies are expected to utilize a much more ideologically driven offensive action against terrorism, based on the many new officials at the top levels of government who have criticized the past Obama policy of killing terrorist leaders but largely ignoring the Islamist extremist ideology that motivates the terrorists.

Sebastian Gorka, deputy assistant to the president, will be a key player in leading the administration's new counter-ideological offensives. The counterterrorism expert has been critical of the Obama administration's failure on this front in the war on terror.

In forming new alliances, Mr. Trump will attempt to reset America's relations with Russia. The president wants to join with Russia in a battle against Islamic terrorism.

But Russia under President Vladimir Putin remains staunchly anti-American. In recent months, Russian military and civilian leaders have made unprecedented threats to use nuclear weapons against the United States. Moscow's military forces have carried out provocative, saber-rattling nuclear exercises and bomber flights near U.S. borders.

Moscow's favorable view of the new president and its efforts to seek closer ties with Washington are not based on a desire to counter common threats. Russia's main goal is to see a loosening of crippling international economic sanctions imposed on Moscow for its 2014 military take over of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula.

On China, Mr. Trump also has thrown down the gauntlet against Beijing. In public statements prior to his inauguration, he made clear that relations with China will not be based on the status quo of recent years, when trade relations dominated and growing concerns about threatening Chinese military activities were played down or ignored.

The next political battleground with China will be the South China Sea, where China is seeking to take control of the strategic waterway. Beijing has built 3,200 acres of new islands in disputed waters and has begun building missile emplacements and other military facilities on them.

Mr. Trump and key aides have vowed that the South China Sea, where some $5 trillion in trade flows annually, will remain international waters and not become a Chinese lake.

For Iran, Mr. Trump has criticized the Obama administration's foreign policy centerpiece: the nuclear deal with Iran that limits Tehran from developing nuclear weapons, but only for 10 years.

The international agreement likely will not be renegotiated despite its flaws — such as not limiting Tehran's ability to build long-range nuclear missiles. An attempt to renegotiate the accord will more than likely produce a collapse of the agreement, which gave Tehran $100 billion in payments frozen since the 1970s.

Domestically, the new president has vowed to undo Congress' Budget Control Act, which choked defense funding by several hundred billion dollars and prompted a budgetary crisis for the U.S. military that is unable to meet its global requirements.

Revoking the defense sequestration will require tough congressional horse trading. Mr. Trump plans to add $500 billion in new spending, a plan that will be expected to challenge the president's announced effort to focus on building up the American domestic economy and infrastructure.

Another major challenge facing Mr. Trump is America's aging nuclear arsenal. Nuclear weapons modernization was stifled for the past eight years under the Obama administration's anti-nuclear policies.

Mr. Trump has vowed to rapidly build up the nuclear arsenal as part of policies he has called Peace Through Strength — similar to the policy of President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s that posits that a strong military is the key to maintaining world peace and stability.

A major priority for the new administration should be the development of new cyber and information warfare policies — capabilities needed to counter the growing information threats posed by hacking and influence operations undertaken by China, Russia, Iran, North Korea and the Islamic State.

Mr. Trump has ordered his administration to draw up new and more aggressive cybersecurity policies.

In the Information Age, such capabilities to challenge foreign information and cyberthreats are urgently needed.

Bill Gertz is a national security columnist for The Washington Times and author of "iWar: War and Peace in the Information Age."

Military expansion goals: Big, modern, ready

By Dakota L. Wood

President Trump has pledged to expand the size of the U.S. military by as much as one third in some areas. The U.S. already spends more than $600 billion a year on defense, and some estimate the expansion could tack on an extra $100 million annually.

That's an eye-watering amount, albeit well within historical averages for the U.S. The real question is, "Does the country really need a military that big and that costly?"

Throughout the Cold War, the answer was indisputably, "Yes." The U.S. needed a military capable of both deterring Soviet aggression in all potential theaters and protecting other U.S. interests too. The U.S. consistently spent the equivalent of $1 trillion annually on defense until the USSR collapsed in late 1991. That led to dramatic reductions in the size — and funding — of the military.

The 9/11 terror attacks thrust the U.S. back into large-scale military operations in distant theaters. Conflicts that started in Afghanistan and Iraq have evolved in many ways and roiled over into Syria, North Africa and beyond.

Fifteen years of conflict have outlasted the planned service life of equipment — hours on planes, miles on tanks and trucks, etc. As equipment wears, it must be repaired or replaced just to sustain operations. And as the years tick by, what was useful in combat becomes obsolete, forcing the military to develop new capabilities to keep pace with our foes.

Our warriors get worn out too, by frequent and lengthy deployments.

With adequate funding, the military could keep pace. But the 2011 Budget Control Act slashed planned defense spending by $1 trillion over the next decade. That forced the military into a dangerous juggling act, trying to balance troop training needs with equipment repair and replacement demands, as well as preparing for future challenges.

Inevitably, all three areas have suffered. Shrinking the force has reduced personnel expenses — but at a cost. Now fewer people must bear what is an increasing operational burden.

So, how large a military does the U.S. need? The U.S. still has global interests, and though the Soviet Union is gone, it has been replaced by an array of challengers who, in aggregate, present an even larger, more complex challenge.

The relatively benign Russia of the 1990s is now actively destabilizing Eastern Europe, rapidly modernizing its military and serving as the lead power broker in the Middle East. A newly expansionist China has made extravagant territorial claims, is intimidating its neighbors and improving its ability to project military power. North Korea is expanding its nuclear arsenal and improving its ballistic missiles. Iran, while retaining its capacity to pursue nuclear weapons, is exploiting the mayhem in the Middle East to press its hegemonic ambitions throughout the region. And terror groups of various stripes, affiliated with or inspired by al Qaeda and ISIS, have cut a swath of destruction from northern Africa through the Middle East and across Europe.

Since World War II, the U.S. has found itself involved in a major "hot" war every 15 to 20 years, while simultaneously maintaining substantial combat forces in Europe and several other regions. Some argue that the world has so changed that the U.S. need not keep large forces "at the ready" — that diplomacy and economic interdependencies have negated the need for "hard power." But countries like Russia and terror groups like ISIS appear not to have embraced that belief. The U.S. really has no choice but to take the world for what it is, while working to make it something different, something better.

In February 2011, then-Secretary of Defense Robert Gates observed that "when it comes to predicting the nature and location of our next military engagements, since Vietnam, our record has been perfect. We have never once gotten it right... we had no idea a year before any of [a series of conflicts] that we would be so engaged."

Having the ability to fight one major conflict enables the U.S. to protect a core interest against a major competitor, but only one. With major competitors simultaneously challenging U.S. vital interests in several areas around the world, America continues to need a global force big enough, modern enough and ready enough to protect its interests.

For the last several years, U.S. senior military officials have consistently warned of the deteriorating state of America's military: its decreasing size, degraded readiness and delayed modernization. President Trump is correct to acknowledge this dangerous state of affairs.

For the federal government, Job One is to "provide for the common defense." The United States needs a military large enough to protect its interests globally — and should budget accordingly.

Dakota L. Wood is a senior research fellow in The Heritage Foundation's Center for National Defense.

Swords or words: Which is mightier?

By Helle C. Dale

Those who believe in the power of public diplomacy often argue that if only the United States spent a fraction of the Pentagon's budget — say, the cost of an F-16 fighter — on outreach to the publics of other countries, the need for defense spending would be greatly reduced. This assertion rests on the assumption that if only we all understood each other better, fewer international conflicts would arise and the world would be a more peaceful place.

The rise of violent Islamist extremism has unfortunately shown that the underlying premise is not necessarily true.

Understanding is manifestly not the key to defeating brutal fanatics bent on spreading a medieval kind of hegemony throughout the Middle East, indeed, the world. In this case, Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" has arrived at such an extreme that mutual understanding simply does not help.

But even looked at more broadly, the debate over spending on military force versus public diplomacy is misguided. The fact is: Without a properly funded and functioning military, in many parts of the world, public diplomacy is all but impossible.

In high-risk environments, the outreach work of diplomats and Public Diplomacy (PD) officers becomes too dangerous without military escorts. At the same time, even with the best of intentions, commanders clearly have to make hard choices, which may well end up cutting out cultural-educational outreach to local populations.

It should also be noted that strained military resources affect other activities, like NGO work, development programs and rebuilding efforts.

Obvious cases in point are the recent U.S. engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The State Department, as well as the Pentagon, has worked hard to reach out to local populations, with decidedly mixed results. In Afghanistan, even after a decade of U.S. military presence, over 90 percent of the population still had no idea why U.S. troops were in their country.

It was not for want of effort, though. The State Department instituted some 30 different cross-cultural programs to foster mutual understanding, and the Pentagon made a number of ill-fated efforts to impact local news coverage. Often the U.S. troops turned out to be the best ambassadors, as they displayed good old-fashioned American decency, generosity and good nature towards local children and populations. Cuts

» see **DALE** | C12

Drones and autonomous systems: An emerging threat

By Robi Sen

The new Trump administration is inheriting a highly volatile world with an ascending Russia, China and Iran, and an unstable Middle East. Europe is going through complex changes involving immigration, economic issues and Brexit, as well as increasing security issues. The security landscape is made even more complex by the rise and effectiveness of rogue states, criminal gangs, terrorists and malcontents who have become more formidable in part due to the rapid spread and democratizing of technology, such as the internet and high-speed wireless devices.

One such technology — autonomous systems, such as drones — has emerged as a major issue for U.S. military forces and law enforcement. Drones will require not only technological solutions, but also intelligent regulation, policy and planning to deal with their proliferation in the coming years.

While reports about the potential hazards of drones to pedestrians and aircraft have made it into the popular press, very little has been reported on actual drone use by terrorists and criminals.

From the wide-scale use of drones by drug gangs in Mexico to separatists in Ukraine using weaponized drones to attack government forces, commercial drones have rapidly become a major tool for hostile actors to provide themselves capabilities that only a decade ago were limited to major state powers.

Now groups like ISIS can, and do, deploy drones to act as surveillance platforms or simple guided weapons. While not as capable as U.S. military drones, commercial drones are cheap, hard to detect and hard to stop.

To help reduce the risk from drones, the Trump administration's first step should be to advance new laws, regulation and policy.

Firstly, the administration can work closely with Congress to pass sensible laws to regulate drones — and also to counter drones. For example, current law treats drones very similarly to manned aircraft, such as a passenger plane. The consequence is that it is currently illegal to interfere with the flight of drone, just like a plane. Right now, most drone countermeasures — such as net guns, jammers, firearms and cyber-based systems — violate these laws. The result has been a legal morass on how private organizations, law enforcement and even government can deal with threatening drones in everything from the airspace around an airport to defending the White House.

The Obama administration, working with stakeholders such as the Federal Aviation Administration, made important strides to clarifying laws. Now, the Trump administration needs to work closely with Congress to create or modify laws to allow for effective countermeasures against drones that represent a threat to public safety.

The Obama administration, working with stakeholders such as the Federal Aviation Administration, made important strides to clarifying laws. Now, the Trump administration needs to work closely with Congress to create or modify laws to allow for effective countermeasures against drones that represent a threat to public safety.

MESMER is a unique, patented, low-power, non-jamming, non-line of sight, non-kinetic drone mitigation solution, enabling an effective and safe method of protecting personnel and infrastructure from dangerous drones. Image courtesy of Department 13.

Yet regulation and legislation will not solely reduce the risk from hostile drones.

Secondly, the administration can encourage and promote research and development of capabilities to stop drones and autonomous systems without causing harm to civilians or infrastructure.

Currently there is no single system or single approach to deal with threatening drones, let alone swarms of drones.

Furthermore, drones and autonomous systems, such as delivery robots, are becoming more sophisticated, making them harder to deal with.

For example, some drones are already equipped with the capability to dodge other drones or even nets fired at them. The rapid evolution of drone capabilities and associated autonomy creates an intricate issue for the administration to address: proactively dealing with emerging and future threats.

Government is notoriously reactionary both in design and practice — yet to deal with the emerging threats from drones and autonomous systems, the new administration must proactively develop policies that are relevant, not only during this administration's tenure but for years to come.

The administration should encourage academia, industry and government to jointly think through the risks and rewards of these new emerging technologies, such as how to secure autonomous systems from hackers or how to clear an airspace of delivery drones in case of an emergency. Careful planning will stimulate emerging economic opportunities and create safeguards to protect society in the future, when drones, bots and autonomous systems will increasingly work and function near humans.

While autonomous systems, such as drones, present an increasing risk to security, a bold administration could foster new policies and regulations that would spur the growth of the drone market while responding to the security risk. Doing this would help the U.S. to effectively capitalize on the many economic benefits of drones while strengthening the U.S.'s and our allies' security.

Robi Sen is the founder and CTO of Department 13 Inc., which focuses on developing security solutions. He is a frequent lecturer on security and defense matters in relationship to emerging technology.

DALE

From page **C11**

in military presence, however, usually impacted diplomatic efforts. The diplomacy and security simply had to go hand in hand.

Then there is the problem that in today's world, high-risk environments are no longer just actual battle zones. The spread of terrorist activity globally has made U.S. embassies more vulnerable and therefore harder to secure.

Since 1999, construction of U.S. embassies overseas has been subject to the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act. With the intention of keeping U.S. diplomatic personnel safe, this has led to the construction of perimeter walls, relocations away from city centers and added security staff — all of which create obvious barriers to outreach.

This state of affairs is often deplored by public diplomacy practitioners. Yet, as we saw in Benghazi in 2012, when security requirements are ignored in decidedly high-risk areas, the consequences can be tragic. Had the military protection of the Benghazi compound not been cut at a time of rising terrorist activity, the four Americans who were killed might still be alive today, and we might have had a chance to engage the people of Benghazi.

And finally, there is no denying that military victories send their own powerful message. As part of its PD efforts, the Obama administration pressured Silicon Valley to help with anti-ISIS messaging. One suspects that greater impact was produced by bombing the terrorist group's military installations and propaganda-spewing media centers. After a string of military defeats, ISIS propaganda has subsided significantly.

President Teddy Roosevelt advocated speaking softly and carrying a big stick. Without a "big stick" to get their attention, other nations are far less likely to heed our diplomats' words or notice our diplomatic works.

Helle C. Dale is the senior fellow for public diplomacy in The Heritage Foundation's Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom.

Grid-protecting CIPA: Enacted, but in time?

By Ambassador R. James Woolsey and Dr. Peter Vincent Pry

Congress, virtually at the last minute and unnoted by the press, finally passed the Critical Infrastructure Protection Act (CIPA) — arguably the single most important piece of legislation approved by Congress in 2016 — by inserting it into the National Defense Authorization Act.

The bill, long-championed by Rep. Trent Franks, Arizona Republican, and sponsored by Sen. Ron Johnson, Wisconsin Republican, in the Senate, has traveled a long road.

Eight years ago, the Congressional EMP Commission urged Capitol Hill to direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to protect the electric grid and other critical infrastructures from a man-made or natural electromagnetic pulse (EMP).

EMP could cause a protracted nationwide blackout. The EMP Commission warned a nationwide blackout lasting one year could kill up to 90 percent of the American people through societal collapse and starvation.

CIPA implements one of the most important recommendations of the EMP Commission to prevent societal mass destruction. It directs the DHS to establish new national planning scenarios focused on protecting and recovering the nation from an EMP catastrophe. All federal, state and local emergency planning, training and resource allocation are based on the DHS national planning scenarios.

Passage of CIPA means that millions of emergency planners and first responders across the nation, including police, firefighters and National Guardsmen, will become part of the solution to the existential threat that is EMP.

CIPA also requires the DHS to start pilot programs demonstrating that the national electric grid can be protected from the catastrophic consequences of an EMP event cost-effectively. CIPA directs the exploration and development of new technologies to make EMP hardening of all the critical infrastructures easier and even more affordable.

CIPA will further help protect the electric grid and other critical infrastructures from cyberwarfare, physical sabotage and severe terrestrial weather. The Congressional EMP Commission recommended that by protecting against the worst threat — nuclear EMP attack — all these lesser threats would also be mitigated.

CIPA may have passed just in time. The threats from nuclear and solar EMP are not merely theoretical, but are clear and present dangers, right now.

NASA warns that on July 23, 2012, a solar flare narrowly missed the Earth. It could have caused a natural EMP, collapsing electric grids and life-sustaining critical infrastructures worldwide, putting at risk the lives of billions. NASA estimates the likelihood of such a solar superstorm is 12 percent per decade.

Thus, it is likely that the American people, and all mankind, will face an existential threat from a solar superstorm within our lifetimes or that of our children. God willing, CIPA will get us prepared.

The nuclear EMP threat is equally worrisome.

Two North Korean satellites, the KMS-3 and KMS-4, already regularly orbit over the United States on the optimum trajectory to make a surprise EMP attack, if nuclear armed.

Russia, China and Iran all subscribe to a new way of warfare that combines EMP and cyberattack against electric grids and other critical infrastructures to swiftly and decisively defeat any adversary. The Congressional EMP Commission warned that Russia and China have developed Super-EMP weapons to implement this strategy — and have apparently transferred the design for a Super-EMP weapon to North Korea.

CIPA is a first necessary step to protect our nation from an EMP catastrophe and other threats. But CIPA will fail if its provisions are ignored — or if corrupt actors in the federal bureaucracy and industry continue to pretend that the EMP threat is not real.

For example, the Obama administration's Department of Energy (DOE) conspired with industry's private Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) to produce a "junk science" study that argued that a nuclear EMP attack would not destroy electric grid transformers or cause a protracted nationwide blackout.

EPRI in 2012 joined with the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) to produce another "junk science" study that falsely claimed natural EMP from a solar superstorm would not damage transformers or cause a protracted nationwide blackout. This was debunked by independent experts at a technical conference before the U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Although U.S. FERC compelled NERC to adopt a standard to protect the grid from natural EMP, the standard is grossly inadequate.

Interestingly, the Energy Department and EPRI excluded the EMP Commission from their dubious study on nuclear EMP effects. Indeed, the Obama administration's Department of Defense did everything in its power to "slow roll" and impede the work of the EMP Commission by withholding funding and security clearances, to which the Commission is legally entitled.

Beyond CIPA, the next necessary step is to "drain the swamp" at FERC, DOE, NERC and EPRI — to reform or replace these with new institutional arrangements to protect our critical infrastructures and the lives of the American people.

Ambassador R. James Woolsey is former director of Central Intelligence and negotiated the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty with the USSR. Peter Vincent Pry, Ph.D., is executive director of the EMP Task Force on National and Homeland Security and served in the Congressional EMP Commission, the House Armed Services Committee, and the CIA. He is the author of "Blackout Wars," which is available through CreateSpace.com and Amazon.com.

F-35 sale to Taiwan? A test of Taiwan and Trump

By John Pike

The United States might sell the F-35 stealth fighter to Taiwan. Although no formal request has been made, the logic of the idea is impeccable.

Taiwan's air force is currently an odd mix of French Mirage 2000s, American F-16s and Taiwan's locally made Indigenous Defense Fighters. These were all fine aircraft when purchased two decades ago. But two decades is really a long time ago in the combat aviation world.

Back in the late 1990s, Taiwan was well on its way to achieving a military balance with China, which then had a very large air force of very old fighters.

That no longer holds true. Today, China has the world's largest fleet of Sukhoi Su-27 Flanker fighters (the Soviet counterpart to the American F-15) — more so than even Russia, where the design originated. China is also developing not one, but two stealth fighters.

The Chinese push for stealth is unsurprising. In these modern times of ours, there are only two types of aircraft — stealth fighters and targets. Though actual combat experience is mercifully nonexistent, most simulations seem to show exchange ratios in the order of 10-to-1, as in stealth fighters tend to shoot down 10 non-stealth aircraft for every single stealth jet lost in combat.

The clearest demonstration of this axiom came recently from South Korea, which held a procurement competition between the (non-stealthy) F-15 and the stealthy F-35. With the F-35 three times as expensive as its F-15 counterpart, the Koreans opted to buy the proven F-15. For a few months.

Suffering buyer's remorse, South Korea ultimately decided that it really wanted the F-35, despite the ballooning price tag. The logic behind this is simple: While the F-35 would provide a real response to Chinese stealth fighters, the F-15 would do little more than provide targets for Chinese fighter aces.

Taiwan originally expressed an interest in buying more F-16s from the Obama administration, but this transaction did not move forward in the face of the administration's fear of provoking the Chinese. Given numerical and technological advances in Chinese air capability, there is now little point in Taiwan procuring more F-16s or other non-stealthy aircraft.

A militarily meaningful fleet of F-35 fighter jets would be rather pricey: Taiwan presently has nearly 400 non-stealthy fighters, and even 100 F-35s would run in the neighborhood of $20 billion, or about twice Taiwan's total annual defense budget.

The 1979 Taiwan Relations Act potentially commits the United States to defending Taiwan from Chinese military aggression. Under this scenario, the Americans would come to the country's rescue, provided only that it manage to hold out for a few days — at least long enough for U.S. reinforcements to arrive. In contrast, China would hope to win before the Americans arrive.

There are surely good arguments for America defending Taiwan, but the middle of a Chinese assault on the island is probably not the best time to remind people of these arguments, particularly when time is of the essence. All the while the once-vaunted "Taiwan Lobby" seems to have dried up and blown away.

If Taiwan will not defend, or pay to defend, itself, why should America? Much in the same way that Donald Trump has argued for NATO members to pay their fair share, if Taiwan is unprepared to spend what is needed to hold out until the cavalry shows up, just why should American defense planning include this scenario? The obligation to defend Taiwan is long-standing — so long-standing that no one can quite remember why this is in America's national interest.

As president-elect, Mr. Trump already broke with tradition on Taiwan, which he seems to view more as an asset in his art of the deal with China. Now in office, Mr. Trump will be asked to sell a new batch of arms to Taiwan, and this request will likely come sooner rather than later.

The sale of the F-35 to Taiwan will be a test of Taiwan's determination to defend itself and a test of Mr. Trump's willingness to walk the walk, in addition to talking the talk.

This will also test Mr. Trump's commitment to the F-35. His proposal to substitute F/A-18s for the Navy's F-35C buy threatens to derange the F-35 program, long the centerpiece of Russian propaganda attacks. Selling 100 F-35s to Taiwan would not entirely compensate for the cutback of 300-odd Navy F-35s, but it would be a step in that direction.

Mr. Trump faces another upcoming fighter aircraft sale test. Iran remains the only country on the planet flying the F-14 Tomcat. These 40-year-old aircraft are long overdue for replacement. Iran and Russia have discussed substituting new Sukhoi Flankers. Mr. Trump may ultimately be confronted with choosing between his good friends in Moscow and fending off his sworn enemies in Tehran. Possibly the matter will be finessed by having Iran buy Flankers from China?

There is great danger here that Taiwan will be played as a pawn — dangled to annoy Beijing, but sold down the river as part of some grand bargain on tariffs and jobs. If there is to be a "deal," it could only be to the detriment of Taiwan. The hazard is that American posturing will leave Taiwan with little more to defend itself than presidential tweets that only further antagonize China.

For Taiwan, phone calls and visits are transient and of little lasting value; sound and fury, signifying nothing. Taiwan would be well served to recall what Conan the Barbarian's father taught him about the secret of steel: words to the effect of "No one in this world can you trust. Not men, not women, not beasts. Steel. Steel you can trust."

John Pike is director of GlobalSecurity.org, the world's leading military information website. http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/staff/jpike.tif

Keeping America's waters safe: Why stealth technology is key

By Gregory E. Sancoff

How effectively will the U.S. Navy protect America's maritime interests during the Trump administration? Given the new president's oft-stated interest in protecting U.S. borders and maintaining our national prestige, it is important that a strong naval force is an integral part of the mix. Turning this goal into a reality, however, may involve incorporating cutting-edge technology in ways that the Navy has not yet fully come to embrace.

Nobody can say just how closely President Trump has studied the current capabilities of the U.S. Navy, but there is one angle he might find troubling: The Navy has never found a way to stop a swarm attack of small boats against the U.S. fleet. As an example of this vulnerability, consider the Millennium Challenge Exercise of 2002 (MC02).

Very briefly, MC02 was a major war game exercise designed to serve as a test of the military's transition toward new technologies. The simulated combatants were "Blue" (the U.S.) and "Red" (an unnamed adversary). Red used a fleet of small boats to determine the position of Blue's fleet on the second day of the exercise; based on this information, Red launched a salvo of cruise missiles that overwhelmed Blue's electronic sensors and "destroyed" one aircraft carrier, 10 cruisers and five amphibious ships. An equivalent success in a real conflict would have resulted in the deaths of more than 20,000 service personnel. Soon after, another significant portion of Blue's navy was "sunk" by an armada of small Red boats, which carried out both conventional and suicide attacks that capitalized on Blue's inability to detect them. In a controversial move, Blue's ships were subsequently "re-floated" and a script imposed to ensure a Blue victory.

This embarrassing episode highlighted the need to implement new technology in ways that could defend against real-life small boat attacks launched by terrorists or enemy powers. In fact, one such stealth-enabled vessel, GHOST, has already been developed by my company, Juliet Marine Systems (JMS).

Comparable to an attack helicopter on water, GHOST is an attack craft designed to protect vital waterways. Using supercavitation technology and high-performance jet engines, GHOST achieves unmatched stability in high sea states, allowing for accurate deployment of defensive weapons. Its large fuel capacity allows for long-term missions, and its heavy weapons payload capacity ensures it can be ready to protect the fleet. What makes GHOST unique is its combination of speed, maneuverability and endurance, all essential to engaging potential enemy swarms before

» see **SANCOFF** | C15

America needs missile defenses

By Michaela Dodge

President Trump has a long "to do" list, starting with repealing Obamacare, fixing the tax code and building a wall. But there is another kind of a "wall" that demands the president's attention: The president must make sure the nation has the missile defenses it needs.

Ballistic missiles remain the weapons of choice for our adversaries for several reasons. From anywhere in the world, they can deliver a lethal payload to the continental United States in less than 33 minutes. They are relatively cheap to build, and the technologies used to make them are becoming more widely available.

And they can deliver not just destruction, but doomsday. A nuclear warhead detonated at a high altitude would completely obliterate the electric grid for an enormous area. That could bring modern life to a halt in multiple states, setting survivors back to 18th century.

Being able to defend ourselves from ballistic missile attack is essential. It is also an extremely complicated technological and engineering challenge.

Throughout his two terms in the Oval Office, President Obama left much undone in terms of addressing the ballistic missile threat. He cancelled projects to develop and advance promising missile defense technologies — like the Airborne Laser, an aircraft with chemical laser that successfully shot down ballistic missiles. The Multiple Kill Vehicle, a technology that could make some existing interceptors more effective, was another casualty of the Obama administration's misguided belief that a strong missile defense would somehow make the country less safe.

Our European allies were left hanging when the administration cancelled efforts to deploy long-range interceptors in Poland and an X-band radar in the Czech Republic. Instead, Mr. Obama began implementing a substitute plan — one that deploys, later than the original plan, less-capable interceptors to Poland and Romania.

The Trump administration should ensure these missile defense deployments remain on track. Further delay would only extend our allies' vulnerability. But the new administration should also improve the plan by developing a long-range ballistic missile defense interceptor that could be deployed to Europe to augment our ability to protect the homeland.

Currently, the only interceptors that protect the United States from long-range ballistic missiles — like those being developed in North Korea — are deployed in Alaska and California. There are 30 of them.

The plan under President George W. Bush was to strengthen that thin layer by deploying a total of 44 interceptors, possibly even more. But in 2010, Mr. Obama decided we didn't need that many to get the job done; he decreased the number to 30.

By 2013, the Obama administration recognized that 30 wasn't enough and decided to go back to the original plan of deploying 44 interceptors. But the dithering has cost our nation several years — years in which we will have to wait before we get better ballistic missile protection.

Mr. Trump will have an opportunity to serve the nation where Mr. Obama failed: spurring the development and deployment of space-based ballistic missile interceptors. Space-based defenses are the most effective way to protect the nation from all types of ballistic missiles — short- and medium-range, as well as long-range.

While still in space, ballistic missiles can't deploy decoys — a limitation that makes it easier to track and "lock on" to them. Space-based missile defense would allow us to defend against large-scale attacks, not just "a handful" of missiles, which is what the current system is geared to handle.

Would such a system be technologically challenging? Of course. After all, it is a rocket science. Would it be impossible? Not at all. The nation came fairly close with the Global Protection Against Limited Strikes program over 20 years ago. And technologies have advanced exponentially since then, opening the promise of space defenses that are cheaper, smaller and more effective.

Today, the largest obstacle to effective missile defense is not technological but political. Domestically, opponents continue to believe that leaving U.S. cities vulnerable to ballistic missile attacks is somehow "stabilizing." Internationally, we have been too sensitive to Russian propagandistic objections.

For eight years, these political considerations have prevented us from applying U.S. technology and creativity to shield us from the rising existential threat of ballistic missile attack. The need for an effective missile defense is greater and more pressing than ever.

Mr. Trump, build up that (missile defense) wall!

Michaela Dodge is a senior policy analyst in The Heritage Foundation's Center for National Defense.

SANCOFF

From page **C14**

they reach their intended targets. In defense roles, missions such as fleet protection; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR); and special operations are likely. Civilian government applications could include law enforcement and search and rescue.

GHOST incorporates technology solutions never seen before: Its 16 flush low-drag paddle controls, located behind its forward-mounted propellers, work in conjunction with a fly-by-wire computer and sensors, allowing GHOST to be completely controlled in high sea states at cruise speeds. JMS created a new form of drag reduction, surrounding its underwater hulls with foam tunnels. Drag reduction allows GHOST to reclaim energy usually lost by conventional propulsion — the trail of bubbles often seen behind power boats — and redirect it to reduce drag. GHOST can actively manage movement of air around its hulls, and does so without pumps, fuel or moving parts. As air is much less dense than water, it is desirable to have air around as much of the hull as possible.

As a stable platform in all types of water conditions, GHOST might allow the U.S. to wage a proper defense against enemy swarms. To date, however, the Navy has decided not to go forward with the development of this technology. Indeed, the Pentagon does not want to purchase our boat and also will not permit us to sell it abroad.

In the Trump era, it will take enhanced attention to technologies such as GHOST to ensure that the U.S. retains its ability to protect itself against enemies on the high seas. Doing so will be one way to ensure that America can indeed become "great again."

Gregory E. Sancoff is president and CEO of Portsmouth, N.H.-based Juliet Marine Systems, Inc. Juliet Marine is dedicated to the rapid development and deployment of technologies that will enhance performance and safety in small vessels.

Missile defense in the next four years

By Riki Ellison

America faces near-peer challenges from Russia and China, which possess modernized complex offensive capability in ballistic missiles, anti-satellite technology, hypersonic glide vehicles, cruise missiles and unmanned aerial systems (UAS). Within the next four years, North Korea and Iran will have solid-fueled mobile missiles, multiple re-entry vehicles and intercontinental-range ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that will challenge in quantity and capability currently deployed U.S. missile defense systems.

While China's modernized ballistic and cruise missile arsenal puts Okinawa, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan and Guam at risk, Russia successfully demonstrated its modernized UAS, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and cruise missile capacity in combat in Ukraine and Syria.

Russia's success highlights the vulnerability of U.S. Army's Combat Brigade Teams, which lack adequate maneuverable air defense capabilities in the European theater. China's sophisticated weapon systems exploit our vulnerabilities and restrict U.S. and allied freedom of movement in the Asia-Pacific region. North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile testing and proliferation has to be accounted for by having capability to defeat these systems.

The United States requires a new policy and a new vision to develop, acquire and deploy new technologies; modernize current systems; and increase current capability to defeat these threats in air and space and during the boost, midcourse and terminal phases of their flights. We must develop and deploy a seamless continuum of layered "right-of launch" defensive capabilities and "left-of-launch" offensive capabilities. Missile defense "hit to kill," directed energy, and electronic attack capabilities should be integrated, also using electronic and cyber means to effectively disrupt the opponent's C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance).

The base for this architecture consists of a global persistent distributed air- and space-based missile defense system that is fused together and merges U.S. regional and homeland defenses to enable the best interceptor to engage from the best sensor. For this, an architecture based on a global network of discriminating sensors from commercial satellites, U.S. Air Force satellite constellations, air- and terrestrial-based sensors should be established to gather mass persistent awareness and discrimination for targeting for all interceptor systems.

Greater efficiency and effectiveness can be proved by a multi-mission interceptor system that can support multiple layers using different defensive intercept technologies on a single platform that is transportable and mobile. New intercept technologies that reduce the cost of intercept need to be highly funded, developed and deployed, with emphasis on electronic attack for mass soft kill, and directed energy, especially on UAV's (unmanned aerial vehicles) for boost phase and hypervelocity powder guns for point defense.

Maximizing current missile and air defense capability in both quantity and modernization is needed to introduce "distributed lethality" on 200 ships, increasing our homeland defense to 100 GBIs (Ground-Based Interceptors) with a combination of transportable launchers and multiple object kill capabilities on each kill vehicle; operationalizing the full air and missile defense capabilities of all U.S. Aegis Ashore sites and Aegis BMD (ballistic missile defense) ships capable of defense against ICBMs in the terminal phase; development of 10 THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) systems with multiple operational deployments in EUCOM (European Command), PACOM (Pacific Command), and CENTCOM (Central Command); and an available Global Response Force and two additional Patriot battalions.

U.S. allies should be encouraged and incentivized to invest and integrate their homeland defense systems with U.S. air and missile defense platforms, allowing for interoperability between U.S. and allied defense systems and creation of a comprehensive joint air and missile defense architecture.

An investment of $10 billion to $12 billion a year over the next five years — close to 2 percent of our defense budget in this domain — can bring forth a clear and effective defense of the United States and its allies from near-peer adversaries and rogue nations.

Peace through strength and defensive technology, breakthrough capability and capacity brings forward more options to resolve, deter and win the battle environment for the president of the United States of America and U.S. allies.

Riki Ellison is founder and chairman of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, a nonprofit organization launched in 2002 to promote evolution, development and deployment of missile defense. Since its founding, the MDAA has grown to more than 14,000 members worldwide and is viewed as the top lay expert voice on missile defense.

Fixing readiness doesn't require a spending boost

By Benjamin H. Friedman

A "readiness crisis" afflicts the U.S. military, according to congressional hawks eager to boost military spending. President Trump promises to reverse what he labeled the military's "depletion" in his dystopian inaugural address. That's an improvement over his campaign rhetoric, which labeled it a "disaster" in "shambles."

In reality, there's no depletion or readiness crisis, unless it's a crisis that the U.S. military can't be everything that hawks want. The military does have readiness problems, but they could be addressed without raising total military budget. Those lamenting the state of military readiness ignore those solutions because they are using it to argue for a higher topline.

In principle, U.S. military readiness refers to the force's ability to perform its key missions. That means having units that are well-equipped, manned and trained. Two internal Pentagon tracking systems rate readiness on that score. That sounds simpler, but readiness' definition makes it tough to assess.

One reason is that its definition complicates assessment. The force's ability to accomplish its missions depends partly on future enemy actions, which are inherently uncertain.

There's also ambiguity as to what missions matter. Is a Marine unit that is prepared to strike at desert insurgents — but ill-equipped to land on contested Chinese beaches — unready?

Another complexity is that military readiness isn't an absolute good. Given limited resources, one cannot be fully prepared for everything all the time. Readiness should rise and fall as U.S. forces prepare for and exit conflicts.

These ambiguities mean that debates that appear to concern readiness are actually about other issues, like what to buy and what wars to expect. A telling example came last summer when former CIA Director David Petraeus and foreign policy scholar Michael O'Hanlon published two articles calling the "readiness crisis" a myth. They argued that while readiness is hardly perfect, vehicles are generally well-maintained and combat units well-trained and equipped for current wars.

Their argument produced a bevy of criticism from hawkish analysts. But these responses oddly accepted the basic point of contention — that readiness for current missions is hardly in crisis — before complaining about some other matter, like the force's size, funding or preparation for future rivals.

Likewise, the service chiefs frequently complain about readiness in asking for budget increases. But they don't put today's readiness challenges in historical context or define what deviation from ideal is acceptable. They avoid claiming that readiness is in crisis and resent contentions that U.S. forces are enfeebled.

The U.S. military's readiness problems are largely the fault of those that most loudly bemoan them. That includes Pentagon bosses and especially congressional leaders. They routinely reject three fixes that require no budget boost.

The first and best option is to ask less of the military. A defense strategy that prioritized among dangers, rather than trying to stabilize most corners of the earth, would leave the force less strained and allow cuts to force structure. The savings

» see **FRIEDMAN** | C20

Fighting with (and without) our allies

By Jed Babbin

America's strategic posture — both military and diplomatic — depends, in part, on our allies. What our allies can or cannot do — and will or will not do — is key to our ability to deter or defeat the many threats we face.

During the Cold War, America was a superpower. Because the free world looked to us for leadership and our adversaries respected us, we could influence every important world event. President Obama's foreign policy ended all of that.

Winston Churchill once said: "There is only one thing worse than fighting with allies and that is fighting without them." Mr. Trump is about to see just how bad it can be in both circumstances.

During the campaign, Mr. Trump criticized many of our allies, correctly saying that most of them aren't spending enough on their own defenses. His harshest words were aimed at NATO, which he said is obsolete. Japan and South Korea, he said, might need nuclear weapons and that nations where U.S. troops were stationed should cover that cost.

And then there's the United Nations, which isn't an alliance at all. It's a media circus used by dozens of despots to politically attack the few democracies left in the world. Mr. Trump can begin to repair our alliances and deal with the U.N., but none of it will be easy.

Most of NATO's 28 members are essentially incapable of defending themselves. Despite their mutual defense pledge, only five of NATO's members spend the agreed-to 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense. Nearly all of its members are also members of the European Union, which competes with NATO for funding and on policy decisions.

Japan and South Korea invest significantly in defenses, the latter far more heavily. Pressured by its allies, Japan is about to increase its military budget significantly. They, and the Philippines, were cast adrift waiting for Mr. Obama's illusory "Pacific shift."

Mr. Trump will quickly come to realize that our national security — and that of our allies — is not just a matter of cash flow.

He needs to take a "tough love" approach toward NATO. Mr. Trump should tell its members that we can't defend them unless they spend enough, and in the right way, for them to help us do so. They — and we — will be considerably stronger if they invest in their own defenses in a manner that best provides them the ability to operate with us, on and off the battlefield.

Israel is strong and wants to be faithful, but Mr. Obama sided with its enemies consistently in his Iran nuclear weapons deal and at the U.N. Mr. Trump can begin to repair the damage Mr. Obama has done to Israel. First, he needs to tear up Mr. Obama's nuclear weapons deal with Iran, which endangers us as well as Israel, Europe and all non-Shiite Middle Eastern nations. Second, he should give a major speech in which he reaffirms our alliance with Israel in the strongest terms.

Mr. Trump and some of his advisers have already declared that they will defeat the poisonous Islamist ideology. Because most of the Arab nations of the Middle East and Southwest Asia help spread that ideology, they cannot be dependable allies, but they may join ad hoc coalitions of nations.

Least important, but sometimes most troublesome, is the U.N. If Mr. Trump applies any cost-benefit analysis to it, he'll find that the U.N. costs a lot (around $8 billion a year) and delivers almost zero benefit. To deal with it, he can learn from Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

Mr. Bush seemed confused about the U.N. On one hand, his "Proliferation Security Initiative" — formed and operated independent of the U.N. — succeeded as an ad hoc alliance with nations ready to help interdict shipments of nuclear equipment and technology from North Korea. On the other hand, at NATO's insistence, Mr. Bush spent six months trying unsuccessfully to get a U.N. blessing before invading Iraq.

Mr. Bush's PSI followed the example of Reagan's conservative internationalism by engaging the world without sinking in the U.N. quagmire. That is the model for ad hoc alliances that Mr. Trump should follow. At the same time, he should substantially reduce our funding of the U.N., thus showing that we have no tolerance for its anti-democracy antics.

The key to all of this is American leadership. By crafting an assertive foreign policy and backing it up with action, Mr. Trump can restore America to the superpower status it needs to recreate a *Pax Americana*.

Jed Babbin served as a deputy undersecretary of defense in the George H. W. Bush administration. He is the best-selling author of books including "Inside the Asylum: How the UN and Old Europe are Worse than You Think" and "In the Words of Our Enemies." He is a senior fellow of the London Center for Policy Research.

Military spouses — and a renewed call to hire our heroes

By Eric Eversole

For nearly six years, Hiring Our Heroes at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation has led the nationwide effort to find meaningful careers for veterans and military spouses through hiring events, fellowship programs, online resources, and other programs and initiatives.

Since we launched in March 2011, we have successfully halted — and reversed — the national veteran employment crisis, and are now making innovative strides in supporting a new generation of military families through the transition process.

Our commitment to grassroots engagement and public-private partnerships has sparked monumental shifts in military family employment. Through our collaborative efforts, more than 28,000 veterans and military spouses have obtained jobs through Hiring Our Heroes events — and now, more than 2,000 companies have committed to hire 710,000 veterans and military spouses as part of the Hiring 500,000 Heroes campaign. Already, we have seen 505,000 confirmed hires.

While tremendous progress has been made for transitioning service members, veterans and military spouses in finding meaningful employment, we have more work to do.

As a nation, we need to redouble our efforts to support and employ military spouses. The military spouse community faces unemployment rates of up to four times the rate of veterans. Because of frequent moves across the country, résumé gaps due to time out of the work force, and other challenges related to their partners' service, spouses face unique hurdles that other job seekers simply do not. Military spouses make up an incredibly talented work force, and their absence is a missed opportunity for businesses.

Military spouse employment is not only an economic issue, but a matter of national security. Statistics show that retention of good service members depends greatly on opportunities for military spouses. Military families are no different from other American families in depending on two incomes, and in order to maintain the best fighting force possible, we need to ensure that military spouses have equal opportunity to contribute to our economy. But just as with veterans and transitioning service members, recruiting and retaining military spouses in the right positions is not just a "feel-good" or necessary thing to do, it is the right thing to do from a business perspective. It's good for the bottom line.

That's why Hiring Our Heroes is committed to leveraging the power of the private sector. Through our connections to the business community, we see companies like Starbucks, Prudential, USAA, Capital One, La Quinta, CarMax and many others stepping out and leading the way to develop robust hiring strategies that fully incorporate military spouses.

Companies can take immediate action today by partnering with Hiring Our Heroes and joining the coalition to foster military family employment. Together, we can tackle the challenge of full military family employment — because without focusing on military spouses, we only have half of a strategy.

Eric Eversole is president of Hiring Our Heroes, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Remember the caregivers

By Sen. Elizabeth Dole

During a recent news conference, President Trump reaffirmed his administration's commitment to helping our nation's veterans, many of whom face steep mental and physical challenges after returning from their time on the battlefield. As the longest war in U.S. history continues, so too does the responsibility to care for these brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our freedom.

While access to care has improved at the Department of Veterans Affairs over the last few years, the new administration must recognize that the care for our veterans does not fall entirely on the shoulders of the government.

Not by a long shot.

In actuality, many family members or friends step into the role of a military caregiver without sufficient assistance and support from government programs. These spouses, mothers, dads, children, siblings or friends are typically taking on the role of caregiver for the first time — with little or no training — while managing complex injuries and illnesses over a lifetime of care.

When my husband Bob Dole was admitted to Walter Reed Army Medical Center for an extended period of time, my eyes were opened to the tremendous challenges facing the loved ones caring for our wounded veterans. Indeed, all the science and experience points to an undeniable societal crisis that demands a national response.

Though military caregivers are not always visible, they are all around us: According to a first-ever assessment of this community by the RAND Corp., there are more than 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers in the United States. As an unpaid work force, these "hidden heroes" are providing nearly $14 billion in services annually to care for those who have returned from war. These are costs that would otherwise be borne by society.

The research also shows that military caregivers often face these challenges alone, isolated from the community around them. Many caregivers have been forced to become the sole breadwinner of the household, navigating a complex health care and benefits system while trying to raise a family. Military caregivers must also confront the long-term challenges that invisible wounds may present their loved one, such as post-traumatic stress and depression.

What's equally troubling is that caregiving is hurting the nation's caregivers themselves. The RAND study found that those caring for post-9/11 veterans are suffering depression at nearly four times the rate of civilian caregivers. Many spend hours each day providing care and — because of the multiple and serious conditions they are caring for — consistently experience more personal health problems, financial challenges, workplace issues or strains in family relationships as compared to non-caregivers.

The Trump administration and David Shulkin, the nominee to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs, must take note that the situation with caregivers of veterans is a silent crisis, one in which those most in need of help are often too overloaded and stressed to ask for it.

That's why the Elizabeth Dole Foundation launched the Hidden Heroes campaign last fall — to bring public attention to this crisis and to better connect military caregivers to resources and support. The Foundation also awards innovation grants to nonprofit organizations that make a direct impact in the lives of America's veteran caregivers.

Underscoring the grassroots nature of the effort, the U.S. Conference of Mayors last summer passed a resolution encouraging all cities to become military and veteran caregiver supportive cities. More than 70 cities thus far have signed on to participate.

Tom Hanks, chairman of the Hidden Heroes Campaign, succinctly captured the sentiment of the cities and organizations that are joining forces under the Foundation's leadership to help the unsung heroes who care for the nation's veterans.

"Military caregivers don't often ask for help, but they deserve our support," he said. "Together, we all can bring military caregivers out of the shadows to honor their service and strengthen their support systems."

Elizabeth Dole is a former U.S. senator from North Carolina who has also previously served as secretary of the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Labor. She is founder and president of Caring for Military Families: The Elizabeth Dole Foundation.

Renew support for military families

By Joyce Raezer

Life is all about give and take — at least, that's what we're told since childhood. But for our nation's service members and their families, this sense of balance is off.

Our military members are prepared to lay down their lives to protect our freedom. Their 2.9 million family members stand behind them with pride. But the network of support they rely on to face the challenges of military life is weakening.

We ask President Trump, and our fellow Americans, to recognize the service and sacrifice of our military families — and provide them the support they need to remain strong.

Since September 11th, almost 3 million service members have deployed in support of our freedom. The conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have faded from public view, so much that most Americans think these wars are over. But they're not. In fact, nearly 300,000 troops are currently deployed throughout the world to these areas and elsewhere. You've seen the headlines about 3,500 soldiers leaving their families in Colorado and heading to Poland for training and what the Department of Defense calls "security cooperation activities." Almost 300 Marines are leaving Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for training and exercises north of the Arctic Circle in Norway.

Whether our troops are in combat zones, on ships, or in training with our allies, military families pay the price. Their loved one isn't here. Their husband, father, wife or mother is in a dangerous place, far from home. Meanwhile, the family is forced to move on without them. Thousands of military children will celebrate birthdays or graduations this year with one or both parents deployed.

Nearly 7,000 service members have died in combat in the last 15 years of war, leaving grieving families to pick up the pieces of what was taken from them.

Families fortunate enough to see their loved ones return from battle often discover that invisible wounds, like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), have changed their lives forever.

Military spouses struggle to achieve their educational and career goals amid the challenges of military life, including raising children as a single parent while their service member is deployed. Why does that matter? Because sometimes that spouse's paycheck is sorely needed to keep the family finances above water — especially if an illness or injury forces the family out of military life without the support they need.

Military families willingly take on these sacrifices. They are proud and amazingly resilient, but they're tired. In return for their sacrifices, they need continued support from all Americans, but especially from our leaders in Washington. The readiness of our military members depends on the strength of their families.

Perhaps the greatest burden our military families bear today is uncertainty. Years of budget battles have left these families wondering whether the resources they rely on will disappear. Sequestration has put military pay and benefits on the chopping block over and over again, adding to the uncertainty faced by our troops and their families. It has gutted some of the support programs families need most, especially those dealing with deployments, frequent moves and other military life challenges.

It's time for our nation's policymakers and our new commander in chief to demonstrate they understand how much our service members and their families sacrifice.

We must never take the giving spirit of our service members and their families for granted.

Thanks to their selflessness, our liberties are guaranteed.

Let's give thanks as a grateful nation and demand our nation's families are taken care of, without compromise.

Joyce Raezer is executive director of the National Military Family Association. She's a military spouse, staunch military family advocate and recognized expert on military families.

Hearing our forgotten men and women in the military

By Elaine Donnelly

On Inauguration Day, President Donald Trump talked about the "forgotten men and women of our country. Everyone is listening to you now."

These words must have encouraged forgotten Americans in the military. For many years, their opinions about politically correct mandates from Pentagon officials have been deliberately ignored.

Consider Marine Capt. Lauren Serrano, who respectfully asked a question of President Barack Obama at a military forum last September. Capt. Serrano cited Marine Corps field tests showing that mixed-gender units took up to 159 percent longer to evacuate a wounded battlefield casualty.

"As the wife of a Marine who deploys to combat often," she said, "that added time could mean the difference between my husband living or dying. Why were these tangible negative consequences disregarded?"

Mr. Obama's rambling answer betrayed indifference. In 2015, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter abolished women's exemptions from direct ground combat units, such as the infantry, showing little concern about disproportionately high female injury rates. Mr. Carter brushed aside scientific research showing that in field tests with typical combat arms tasks, all-male teams outperformed mixed-gender units 69 percent of the time.

Then-Commandant General Joseph Dunford asked that some fighting units, such as infantry battalions and Special Operations Forces, remain all-male. He backed that request with empirical data confirming physical differences in strength and endurance that would impede speed and lethality in battle.

None of that mattered. The administration's goal was to promote demographic "gender diversity metrics" (quotas), regardless of the impact on combat effectiveness.

In an official survey of Navy SEALs and Special Operators, 85 percent of respondents opposed mixed-gender commando teams, with 80 percent expressing doubts about women's physical abilities to handle the job.

When the Army asked 170,000 active-duty women whether they would want to serve in combat arms units, such as the infantry, 92.5 percent said they would not. Mr. Carter nevertheless announced that combat arms assignments for minimally qualified women would be made on the same involuntary basis as men.

Two combat veterans who were planning to resign due to PC [politically correct] mandates told me they have changed their minds. They and many others are relying on Mr. Trump's pledge, "I will never, ever let you down."

Mr. Carter also disregarded a major Center for Naval Analysis survey asking thousands of Marines how prospective rule changes making women eligible for the combat arms would affect their decisions to join or stay in the Corps. Five percent of female Marine respondents said they would not have joined the Corps under such rules.

When women were asked about orders to serve in the combat arms on an involuntary basis, negative responses jumped to 23 percent, almost one in four. Twenty-two percent of male Marines expressed the same opinion.

Surveys such as this matter because our all-volunteer force depends on young men's and women's willingness to serve in uniform.

Recently, The Washington Times reported that personnel shortages could threaten the Trump administration's plans to rebuild the military. Bonuses of $10,000 or more may not be enough to retain personnel and families, especially when civilian jobs become more attractive as our economy gets stronger.

Politically correct social experiments have alienated personnel that the military cannot do without. Uniformed doctors and nurses, for example, are being ordered to provide or condone transgender hormone treatments or surgeries that many consider unethical.

Mr. Obama's transgender policy disregards the fact that changes in bureaucratic "gender markers" cannot transform a man into a woman or vice versa. True gender markers exist in unchanging XX and XY chromosomes in human DNA, but biological realities are not PC.

A Navy officer told me he will have to disobey orders to promote transgender education materials that he knows to be false. Because the Obama administration decided in 2015 to treat transgenders as a special, protected class, there are no conscience protections for medical personnel or military chaplains.

Military women, to no avail, have expressed concerns about personal privacy and "gender pretenders" in private living quarters. Students and parents with children in Defense Department schools weren't even asked about a recent decision to open school locker rooms and restrooms to persons identified at birth as the opposite sex. Several states are challenging similar mandates in civilian schools, but in the armed forces all personnel must stay silent, follow orders, or leave.

Political correctness that threatens the all-volunteer force is a national security issue. Will help soon be on the way?

The 2016 Republican National Platform promised to conduct "an objective review of the impact on readiness of the current Administration's ideology-based personnel policies" and to "correct problems with appropriate administrative, legal, or legislative action."

The platform also stated, "We reject the use of the military as a platform for social experimentation . . . Military readiness should not be sacrificed on the altar of political correctness."

Mr. Trump reinforced this resolution when he said to all Americans, including military personnel and families, "You will never be ignored again."

Two combat veterans who were planning to resign due to PC mandates told me they have changed their minds. They and many others are relying on Mr. Trump's pledge, "I will never, ever let you down."

For reasons of national security, and to retain American military superiority, the new administration must never let military voices be forgotten again.

Elaine Donnelly is president of the Center for Military Readiness, an independent public policy organization that reports on and analyzes military/social issues. More information is available at www.cmrlink.org.

Today's military families: Strong, but overdeployed

By Kathy Roth-Douquet and Michael O'Hanlon

The strength and the heart of our military excellence is the people, and evidence shows that the people are stressed to the point of discouragement — in part because many of the expectations surrounding military personnel are based on outmoded understandings of family life.

As the Trump administration begins to set priorities for national security, it should take note of the continued stress and the changing expectations facing our 21st century military and their families. It is heartening Mr. Trump is concerned about wear and tear on the force, and proposes roughly a 15 percent buildup in its size, as well as increases in funds for military personnel and weapons acquisition.

Since the sum total of these aspirations may prove too expensive, prioritization will likely be required. In streamlining his wish list, therefore, Mr. Trump may wish to take stock of the concerns and observations of those wearing the uniform today — as well as their families.

Investing in technology and equipment alone is not enough to rejuvenate the force. The strength and the heart of our military excellence is the people, and evidence shows that the people are stressed to the point of discouragement — in part because many of the expectations surrounding military personnel are based on outmoded understandings of family life. The organization one of us runs, Blue Star Families, has just completed and released its annual survey on the state of military families, available at bluestarfam.org/survey.

For us, two findings stand out perhaps most prominently.

-- Overdeployment. With only about 10 percent as many forces officially deployed to the nation's active missions in Afghanistan and Iraq/Syria as had been the case, most Americans believe that our forces have essentially come home from war. But in our survey, more than four in 10 families have had a service member deployed for at least six months in the past year and a half. This comes on top of the 15 years of war these families have experienced (with most having more than four years of family separation since 9/11). As a result, a whopping 72 percent of respondents consider the current pace of global deployment to be unacceptably stressful on their families. This kind of situation could jeopardize the sustainability of the all-volunteer force.

-- Spouse underemployment. Military compensation is reasonably good compared to that of civilians of comparable age, education and experience, yet the nature of the military lifestyle with its frequent moves makes it very hard to have a two-income family. Indeed, there really is no comparability between military service and civilian employment, as then-Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning underscored at the event we held together at Brookings on Dec. 8. To take one measure, military families are 27 percent less likely to have dual incomes than couples/families in the civilian sector, and 21 percent of military spouses report being unemployed, with many more underemployed. On a related matter, 66 percent of families say they are unable to find the child care they need — probably a function of often being in a new place, combined with the financial constraints noted above. Today's millennials flag that spouse unemployment is one of their top concerns with military life.

Where does this leave us? Lawmakers of both parties in the House and Senate have already halted further planned drawdowns in the size of the military this year. But there is clearly more to do, as the survey findings underscore.

--Today's force probably should grow in size at least modestly.

--In regard to military families and their income, we need to help promote employment of military spouses in and out of government. For example, we should encourage the private sector to hire and allow remote work for military spouses, perhaps with tax credits. Some military benefit reform may be reasonable, especially when guided by goals such as enhancing fairness in pensions (where those with 20 years service get good retirement packages but those with less still get nothing) and efficiency in the use of military health care. But any such reform should be at least neutral in its net effects on overall compensation per family.

--The military services, combatant commands and civilian leadership should also look for ways to replace some overseas deployments with different types of forward presence that can be easier on families. Options could include basing more forces in Europe and Korea on normal tours, with their families, rather than relying so heavily on rotations/deployments; considering a change to the size and scale of Okinawa/Guam Marine Corps deployments in one way or another; and looking for more clever ways to sustain ships overseas, such as crew swaps that allow ships to remain forward in theater while crews are rotated in and out by airplane.

Mr. Trump can take office resting assured that the state of today's American armed forces, man for man, woman for woman, family for family, is excellent. Today's warrior families are as dedicated to their mission as ever, and they are certainly as good at their professions as they ever have been as well. But they are also tired, and stressed, by the legacies of war, the burdens of current deployments, and the nature of military life.

We can and should do better by them — and thereby help ensure their excellence, as well as the nation's security, in the years and decades ahead.

Kathy Roth-Douquet is founder and CEO of Blue Star Families and was a military spouse; Michael O'Hanlon is a senior fellow at Brookings and author of "The $650 Billion Bargain: The Case for Modest Growth in America's Defense Budget."

FRIEDMAN

From page **C16**

could fund the operational accounts that pay for the readiness of the force.

Second, even without a strategic shift, Congress could cancel complex platforms, like the Littoral Combat Ship or F-35, which suck up operational funding, and replace them with simpler alternatives — or do with less in some areas.

A third solution is to eventually free up funds for operational accounts by cutting spending on excess bases and by slowing the growth in personnel costs.

Congressional defense committees dismiss the first solution because they see U.S. military efforts as indispensable to world order, perhaps because of the spending indispensability requires in their districts. They reject the second option for similar reasons. Indeed, they reject it so thoroughly that they often do the opposite — shifting funds from operational accounts to acquisition at the expense of readiness.

The third option falls prey to concerns about cuts to local jobs and potential calumny about not supporting the troops.

Congressional Republicans aren't especially motivated to fix the readiness crisis because they use it to pressure Democrats to increase defense spending. In that sense, they care less about readiness for current wars than readiness for the array of imagined future wars.

In Washington, readiness now seems to mean whatever the speaker wants from the military. We should discard the term in recognition of the fact that military spending choices are mostly about what to be ready for, not how to be ready for everything.

Benjamin H. Friedman is a research fellow in Defense and Homeland Security Studies at the Cato Institute.

Troop morale linked to upholding chaplains, religious ministries

By Dr. Wes Modder

No one could have imagined just a few decades ago that a secularist invasion would change military policy from "don't ask, don't tell" to our current rendering that all gay and transgender people are fit for full service in the military.

Regardless of one's beliefs on social matters, this policy decision sets up a collision course with the privately and constitutionally protected religious beliefs of service men and women — including attacks on the private counsel, preaching and communications of military chaplains.

The beneficial impact of the religious ministries on troop morale is without question. It inspires hope, strengthens spiritual well-being, increases personal resilience, and these collectively enhance mission readiness, according to the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps. (http://www.navy.mil/docs/ImpactofReligiousMinistry_Final.pdf).

To be blunt, to stifle the free expression of religion among our military troops is a morale killer.

While military chaplains do need to navigate a pluralistic military that includes many faiths, atheists and agnostics, some commanders in error have interpreted pluralism as the highest order. Their reasoning is that all troops are not Christian, therefore all troops should never have to hear the name of Jesus or have their eyes burned by the posting a Bible verse on a bunk or workstation of their co-worker.

Some commanders have gone too far by ordering Christian military chaplains to not pray in Jesus' name. Whose name should a Christian chaplain pray in?

George Washington saw the matter quite differently, believing spiritual fitness was tantamount to unit readiness. Washington directed the Continental Congress to establish the Army Chaplain Corps in 1775. For the sake of unit readiness, the military needs chaplains who will speak truth according to their ordaining denominations. The military needs men and women of God who are prophetic to the institution and not simply part of the latest social cause taken up by one political party or another. This is true for force multiplication and for the spiritual resilience our warriors need when they serve in harm's way.

With President Obama's policy change in place, I found myself in legal trouble: An openly gay service member, who sought out my counsel as a clergyman, filed a complaint because he did not agree with my counsel on matters of faith and human sexuality that was in accordance with my ordaining body, the Assemblies of God.

Governmental discrimination against people of faith in the armed forces is unacceptable and will impact the morale of any unit. Prohibitions on chaplains being disciplined for counseling from their scriptures and ordaining body must be upheld.

The Navy wanted me to support policy in the area of "care" that went against my ordination, conscience and deeply held religious convictions. Suddenly, I was forced to make a decision between my Creator and my commander.

The complaint filed by the young officer seemed to snowball, and in short order I was not only being investigated for an Equal Opportunity (EO) complaint, but I was brought up on charges of dereliction of duty. Shortly after that, my commanding officer gave me a letter of dismissal from the service approximately 18 months prior to my earliest retirement date.

"Just walk away." Those words still ring in my ears.

I was on the phone with someone I respected as a retired military chaplain who continued our conversation: "Just walk away. Wes, you can retire with honor in September of 2015, and you can keep your good name. I've seen this happen before, and it never turns out well. It's not worth the energy and emotional capital it will cost both you and your family. It's just not worth it; there are no winners in this."

Yet, in my heart, I believed that I was to stand firm for religious liberty. This felt like my David and Goliath moment. I did not pick the fight, but I was willing to fight because the cause was just.

Should I lose my case, it would be open season on religious liberty, a direct blow to troop morale and unit readiness. If a Navy chaplain can be told how to pray, and what and what not to counsel in private counsel, then religious liberty is dead for all the troops. The warning was clear: Get on board with progressive pluralistic policies, or your career is over and your tainted future is most uncertain.

Eventually, I won my case with the aid of brilliant law firms, such as First Liberty and Wilmer Hale, who partnered with many people who value our precious religious liberties. More importantly, the troops won.

In a current context, on Jan. 20, 2017, then-President-elect Trump attended morning worship services and later that morning during the swearing-in ceremony, Mr. Trump placed his left hand on his childhood Bible and then on a second Bible owned by President Abraham Lincoln. It would be unconscionable for a president to take the oath of office without appealing to God for His grace, mercy, and guidance in the faithful discharge of the president's duties. If calling upon God is important for the guidance of our nation for the commander in chief, then it must be equally protected for the men and women who serve in our armed forces.

Governmental discrimination against people of faith in the armed forces is unacceptable and will impact the morale of any unit. Prohibitions on chaplains being disciplined for counseling from their scriptures and ordaining body must be upheld.

It has been the norm for these last eight years for service members to be pressured to renounce their religious views on topics like sexuality — or be punished for not doing so — as well as other attacks on religious freedom in the military. This "religious cleansing" has national security implications.

Mr. Trump should quickly change the atmosphere by ordering the Department of Defense to make clear that political correctness must end. The free exercise of religious liberty is in the Constitution and military codes and must be guaranteed to all service members and chaplains.

Retired Navy Chaplain Wes Modder, D. Min., is lead pastor of Stone Church in Orland Park, Illinois.

Put more 'healing leashes' into the hands of veterans

By Capt. Jason Haag

President Trump campaigned on promises to improve the government support and overall standard of care offered to military veterans like me. Steps to do so under his new administration must include efforts to provide more lifesaving service dogs to veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

In outlining his vision for the presidency, Mr. Trump emphasized the need to better address the invisible wounds of veterans. I know firsthand that specially trained service dogs can help heal these lasting scars.

After 9/11, I deployed for three combat tours in Afghanistan and Iraq with the U.S. Marine Corps. I was shot by machine gun fire on April 9, 2003, while in direct combat right outside of Baghdad. In the months that followed, I sustained additional injuries from improvised explosive devices on our convoys, ranging from the blasts of explosives strikes on our convoys and patrols to the gunfire of countless small-arm engagements.

The physical injuries that earned me a Purple Heart would eventually heal, yet my invisible wounds — namely, PTS and TBI — continued to haunt me. I suffered from debilitating depression and anxiety, night terrors and flashbacks. I was soon spending day and night alone in my dark basement, self-medicating and contemplating suicide. At rock bottom, I was taking 32 daily medications — including a dozen or so narcotics — and drinking

18 beers a night to fall asleep. I tried everything — medication, individual and group therapy, veterans support groups — but none of the traditional treatment methods seemed to work.

A neighbor and fellow military veteran credited his PTS service dog with turning his life around when everything else failed. I was running out options, and decided to give it a shot.

I applied to a handful of service dog organizations online, where I was met with waiting lists up to three years long. But I knew I couldn't afford to wait: If suicide didn't kill me, my substance abuse would — it felt like it was only a matter of time. Finally, I found a nonprofit group that could pair me with a service dog in as little as seven months. It was still a long wait, but for the first time, I could see a light at the

A neighbor and fellow military veteran credited his PTS service dog with turning his life around when everything else failed. I was running out options, and decided to give it a shot.

end of the tunnel.

Everything changed when I met Axel, a special German Shepherd rigorously trained to manage the symptoms of my invisible wounds. He is now at my side 24/7, helping disrupt my panic attacks and flashbacks, waking me from night terrors, and keeping me calm in high-stress situations, such as crowded shopping malls or loud intersections. Axel's constant companionship has also enabled me to significantly curb my prescription drug intake, which is now down to only two daily medications for TBI.

There is no doubt in my mind that without Axel, I would be another veteran statistic: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) reports that there's an average of 20 veteran suicides every day, many resulting from PTS and TBI. Up to 20 percent of my fellow Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom veterans suffer from PTS, according to VA estimates.

So how can the Trump administration help put more healing leashes into the hands of the veterans who need them now?

The long wait times for veterans seeking service dogs — spanning anywhere from 18 months to three years — stem primarily from the high rate of demand, as well as the time-consuming canine training process. As you can imagine, teaching a dog to detect and respond to the invisible wounds of war is a highly specialized and exhaustive process. It's also expensive, costing upwards of $20,000 per dog.

At American Humane, the country's first national humane organization, which has been supporting the U.S. military and military animals for 100 years, we are working to help get more highly trained service dogs into the hands of veterans with PTS.

Currently, the VA doesn't cover the costs of obtaining and training service dogs for veterans with PTS and TBI. The agency does, however, help offset the same expenses for veterans who use service dogs for visual aid or mobility, offering them a $500 annual stipend.

Those of us who depend on PTS and TBI service dogs should be eligible for the same government support. The Trump administration shouldn't delay: Veterans' lives are at stake.

Retired U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Jason Haag is the national spokesperson for the American Humane Lois Pope LIFE Center for Military Affairs.

Bring fiscal responsibility to defense spending

By Mark Lucas

President Donald Trump has promised numerous times to strengthen America's military. Yet if he hopes to keep this vow, he must tackle a critical issue that's often overlooked: wasteful spending at the Pentagon that endangers our national security and the men and women who wear the uniform.

The Trump administration should begin working with Congress on fiscally responsible reforms that will ensure the strength and sustainability of our armed forces. My organization, Concerned Veterans for America (CVA), has identified several areas where we can cut waste and inefficiency while putting our military on a stronger footing, ready to face any challenge in the years ahead.

The first step is to audit the Pentagon.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is the largest government agency with the largest discretionary budget. And yet, it is the only government agency that has never been audited. Taxpayers deserve more accountability from an agency with 2.8 million employees and an annual budget of $580 billion.

Years of reports about wasteful Pentagon spending make it clear that an audit is overdue. In one egregious example, the DoD spent nearly $150 million to provide security and private villas to a handful of employees in Afghanistan. Another report found that the Pentagon's Defense Logistics Agency was systematically overcharged for aircraft parts and spent over $7 billion on unneeded equipment.

In addition to an audit, Congress and President Trump can begin cutting waste by reversing the costly green-energy mandates put in place by the Obama administration. These include executive orders requiring the Pentagon to incorporate climate change programs and policies at every level of military operations.

These mandates unnecessarily inflate military expenses by adding new layers of bureaucracy and by forcing our armed forces to procure expensive "green" fuel and equipment. In 2015, for instance, the Pentagon spent $150 per gallon on jet fuel derived from algae — 64 times the price of conventional fuel. Green-energy mandates divert attention and resources away from the core mission of our military: keeping America safe.

Another urgent area for reform is the military's health care system, which consumes a growing share of defense spending.

Spending on military health care

» see **LUCAS** | C23

American Gold Star Mothers: Turning sorrow into service

By Candy Martin

Nearly 100 years ago, 1st Lt. George Vaughn Seibold was an aviator who flew in support of The Great War efforts. Since our United States did not have aviation assets to support the war effort, George joined other aviators who trained and flew for one of our allies — Great Britain.

The young lieutenant was careful to send letters home to his parents, Mr. George G. and Mrs. Grace Darling Seibold, who lived in Washington, D.C.

When the letters quit arriving, Mrs. Seibold convinced herself that her beloved son was coming home with the war-wounded to Walter Reed General Hospital. With selfish thoughts, she went to Walter Reed every day, believing that young George, should he be among the war-wounded, would not have any form of identification and she wanted to be there to find him.

The Walter Reed staff, weary from an eager mother hanging around, did what comes natural for any hospital staff — they put her to work! Grace Darling Seibold continued caring for the wounded and the sick after they were transferred from the European combat zone.

When the letter finally arrived with the feared news that 1st Lt. George Vaughn Seibold had been confirmed shot down and there were no remains, Mrs. Seibold continued working to care for the war-wounded. Soon, she sought out Washington, D.C., mothers who were in her similar situation — the Blue Service Star that hung in their window had turned Gold. They all mourned the loss of their sons.

Turning their sorrow into service, Grace encouraged the mothers to do what she was doing — continue the service that their fallen sons could not complete.

A new purpose was born. The women realized that self-contained pity is self-destructive.

In 1928, after years of planning, those 25 Washington, D.C., women met and formed American Gold Star Mothers, named for the Gold Service Stars that hung in the windows of the families who had a family member who had paid the ultimate sacrifice.

By the next year, the organization was incorporated under the laws of Washington, D.C. Chapters were growing throughout the United States and many Gold Star Mothers joined the National Organization of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. — a Veterans Service Organization.

The success of our organization continues because of the bond of mutual love, sympathy and support for one another. Although we grieve for the loss of our fallen sons and daughters, we are a resilient and strong group of patriotic mothers who, while sharing our grief and our pride, have channeled our time and talents to lessen the pain of others.

We stand tall and proud by honoring our children, and serving our veterans, their families and our communities.

Although we are a small organization (approximately 1,200 members), we are a time-honored tradition of strong irrepressible mothers who have a lost a son or daughter in active military service to our nation.

Our losses are different. We are mothers of combat deaths, training-accident deaths, illness, and yes, even suicides. We are an organization of mothers who have lost a son or a daughter (no matter the cause of death) who died while serving our great nation.

In 1928, after years of planning, those 25 Washington, D.C., women met and formed American Gold Star Mothers, named for the Gold Service Star that hung in the windows of the families who had a family member who had paid the ultimate sacrifice.

American Gold Star Mothers, Inc., is a member of the Veterans Administration Voluntary Service Advisory Board. Nearly all of the members of American Gold Star Mothers throughout the United States provide many hours of volunteer work and personal service to veterans, their families, and in their communities. We work closely with all Veterans Service Organizations and appreciate our association with each of them.

In June 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated the last Sunday in September as Gold Star Mother's Day. It is a day that has become a time-honored tradition of remembering mothers whose sons and daughters made the supreme sacrifice for our country.

All too many mothers suffer the unimaginable tragedy of losing a child while they are selflessly serving our country. The least our country can do is to continue honoring Gold Star Mothers on a special day — it communicates the message that we will not forget their son or daughter.

Candy Martin is the national president of American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. She is a combat veteran, having served in Iraq from 2005-2006. She retired in 2013 from the U.S. Army as a Chief Warrant Officer Five.

LUCAS

From page **C22**

increased 130 percent between 2000 and 2012 and now accounts for about 10 percent of the DoD's base budget. Despite the increased spending, surveys show that service members and their families are frequently dissatisfied with their treatment and choice of medical providers.

Fortunately, there is already a proposal on the table that would improve care while getting spending under control. Congress should implement the health care recommendations of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission, which would give military family members and retirees access to a wider array of health care providers while lowering costs over time.

Finally, we must address our growing national debt, which increasingly jeopardizes the economic and military dominance of the United States. In the words of Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis, "no nation in history has maintained its military power if it failed to keep its fiscal house in order."

While our $19 trillion in debt was rarely mentioned during the campaign season, we can no longer afford to ignore it. If we continue to allow the debt to grow at its current pace, in just four years interest payments on the debt will outweigh all spending on national defense.

These budgetary pressures will eventually cripple our ability to fund a cutting-edge military force. To dig ourselves out of this hole, Congress and the administration must trim the bloated federal budget to a more responsible level.

Our military remains the finest on the planet, but years of profligate and wasteful spending have eaten away at its core competencies. The Trump administration should seize the opportunity to reverse course and ensure our armed forces have the resources they need to fulfil their mission — a promise he has made time and again. The enduring safety and prosperity of our country depend on it.

Mark Lucas is executive director of Concerned Veterans for America.

POW/MIA priorities: Accountability for the missing, suicide prevention

By Rolling Thunder®, Inc.

We are an organization comprised of U.S. military veterans, the families of veterans and those who believe and are supportive of our agenda. The Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard are represented in our membership. And while our organization came into existence in the shadows of the Vietnam War, our membership has included those who served in WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and all of the conflicts that have occurred around the world and drawn upon the U.S. military.

And while the theaters of battle and the participants may have been different, a constant has, and always will be, the resoluteness of our military to go into harm's way to accomplish the missions that they've been charged with.

With the above in mind, a major function of Rolling Thunder®, Inc., is to publicize the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action issue: to educate the public that many American POWs were left behind after all previous wars, to help correct the past, and protect future veterans from being left behind, should they become POW/MIA.

Another major function is to add ours to the clarion of voices calling for improvements in the health care outcomes experienced by veterans as a result of inadequacies in the Veterans Administration (VA)-administered health care system.

POW/MIA

If one were to go back just 100 years for the purpose of reviewing how well this country has done in the area of accounting for the millions of American men and women who have been sent off to fight in distant theaters for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedoms which this country's citizenry hold so dear, we as a country have not done so well.

Some say we've done well by accounting for more than 99 percent of all who've been sent into harm's way. The problem with that line of thinking is that included in the less than 1 percent are the 91,000-plus who have not been accounted for. Meaning that 91,000-plus families have sent loved ones off to war, but have not seen nor heard from them since — nor has the government said anything more than they are prisoners or otherwise missing.

The 91,000-plus moms and dads have raised a child, only to have them sacrificed for the "greater good." To know one's child has died in the line of battle is a sorrowful thing. But not to know their whereabouts years after the war or conflict has been terminated should be thought of as more than a parent should have to stand.

And we've not begun to mention the pain and sorrow of a wife, or a child that must grow up fatherless, or siblings who must continue their lives without the love of a brother or sister who has been lost to them forever.

It should not be too much to ask for this country to advance those things of a commemorative nature that could have the effect of soothing the hearts of loved ones.

Rolling Thunder®, Inc., thinks so, and that is why we've gone to great measure in support of 1) flying the POW/MIA flag on the White House and on the Capitol building whenever the American flag is flown, as a way of saying to these families and to the public at large that our government has not forgotten that they did not come home, and 2) the positioning of the "Chair of Honor" in the Capitol Rotunda, as a way of saying to the world that those who are missing are always welcome home.

Health care

For those who've fought in this country's wars, it is certainly not new that many instruments of war are used in order to effect a positive outcome in the field of battle. Couple this with those toxic agents that may have been inadvertently released into the air as a result of enemy actions.

The problem is that quite possibly those instruments of a chemical nature may not have been thoroughly researched, at the time of use, in terms how it may affect

our troops — a principal case being the use of chemically derived defoliating agents used in Vietnam. At the time of the war, our troops used Agent Orange, as well as numerous other agents, to remove the foliage that could conceal the enemy. And in the Gulf War, the enemy took to setting fire to oil wells, releasing thick, toxic plumes into the atmosphere.

Our troops went into these areas soon after release. It was realized only much later that these chemicals were health-altering, remaining in the body possibly as long as for generations.

This could very well mean that our troops were exposed to chemical agents that could affect their family lines for generations to come, thus affecting our troops and possibly their children and children's children.

Rolling Thunder®, Inc., thinks it's only right that research finally be done to determine the potential extent of this problem. In prior sessions of Congress, legislation had been introduced that, if enacted, would address this matter head on, but it will take the *political will* of this country's leadership to make this happen.

There is another matter that is of grave concern to Rolling Thunder®, Inc., which deserves as much attention as can be brought to bear.

It is signified by the red patch with the number 22 on it that we are placing on the vests that we wear.

This red patch represents the suicides that are occurring every day. The number 22 represents the number of suicides committed by military personnel, who are either active-duty or of veteran status. *This is truly an American tragedy. Something must be done to end this.*

The VA appears to be overwhelmed and in need of new leadership and/or direction. The backlogs are legendary, as the health care being provided is falling short of what is required of it.

Additionally, Rolling Thunder®, Inc., recommends that the new administration consider the following key points:

--Ensure VA providers can coordinate care.

--Ensure case management, continuity and consistency in providers, especially for those with critical needs.

--Significantly increase access to mental health care, making it the highest priority.

--Communicate to veterans about VA Choice program, VA capacity, and preserve VA's role as coordinator of care.

--Hire more veterans, and increase access to patient advocates and peer mentors.

--Move toward veteran-focused and veteran-centric care.

--Rolling Thunder®, Inc., strongly urges the new administration to keep our nation's commitment to our veterans.

Legislation

Rolling Thunder®, Inc.'s national leadership supports two pieces of legislation.

Since 2007, we have lobbied Congress to establish a Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, as spelled out in House Resolution 111.

This committee would conduct a full investigation of all unresolved matters relating to any U.S. POW/MIAs who are unaccounted for from the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf States, Vietnam, Korea, the battlegrounds in WWII, and the Cold War.

In the 111th, 112th and 113th Congresses, we had more than enough co-sponsors to bring this legislation to the floor for a vote by the Rules Committee. But despite our meetings with their policy advisers, neither former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi nor former House Speaker John Boehner did anything to move this resolution forward.

Also, Rolling Thunder®, Inc. was highly instrumental in passing legislation requiring that federal buildings and all U.S. Post Offices and military facilities fly the POW/MIA flag on all six national holidays.

Fast-forward to 2017: New legislation was introduced in the 115th Congress by Rep. Leonard Lance, New Jersey Republican, to fly the POW/MIA flag on *all days* that the American flag is displayed, over all federal buildings and military facilities, and especially over the White House and the U.S. Capitol building.

Rolling Thunder®, Inc., is a nonprofit incorporated in 1995 for the sole purpose to advocate for veterans and veterans' rights. It is a nationwide organization of 8,000-plus volunteers in over 90 chapters. Rolling Thunder members volunteer in VA facilities, raise money to support veterans, and lobby state and federal government agencies on the behalf of veterans and their families.